

# ESSENCE

A group of five Black women, the main cast of the TV show 'The Real Housewives of Atlanta', are posed on a rooftop. They are all wearing vibrant orange dresses. The woman in the center foreground is sitting and smiling, wearing a long-sleeved orange dress with a decorative belt. Behind her, three other women are standing, and one is sitting to the right. The background shows a cityscape under a clear blue sky.

**SORORITY  
REPORT:**  
ROOTS  
VS.  
REALITY

**FEELING  
YOURSELF?**

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MOVES  
WE DARE  
YOU TO  
TRY

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POP!**

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LIPS &  
HAIR  
TO  
DYE  
FOR

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AT  
EVERY  
SIZE**

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SAMIRA,  
DANIELLE,  
ADRIENNE,  
UZO & VICKY**

**WEIGHTY  
ISSUE:**

WHEN  
POUNDS  
BLOCK  
YOUR  
PURPOSE

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JULY 2015



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2015

# JULY

VOLUME 46 | NUMBER 3

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#### ORANGE LIKE US

As the third season of Netflix's hit series *Orange Is the New Black* begins streaming, some of the show's stars share why they love the bodies they're in  
*By Akiba Solomon*

### 96 RELEASE THE POUNDS BLOCKING YOUR PURPOSE

Life coach *Lisa Nichols* says that letting go of extra weight is both a physical and an emotional battle

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*By Pamela Edwards Christiani*

**ON THE COVER**  
**Photography by Dennis Leupold.** Stylist, James Knox. For Laverne Cox: Hairstylist, Ursula Stephen for Motions/Epiphany Artist Group. Makeup artist, Matin/tracey mattingly.com. For Samira Wiley: Hairstylist, Vernon Scott. Makeup artist, Nick Barose/Exclusive Artists Management. For Danielle Brooks: Hairstylist, Tish Celestine/LaBelle Boutique NYC. Makeup artist, Merrell Hollis/kenbarboza.com. For Adrienne C. Moore: Hairstylist, Chuck Amos/Jump. Makeup artist, Ashunta Sheriff/kenbarboza.com. For Uzo Aduba: Hairstylist, Lacy Redway/The Wall Group. Makeup artist, Janice Kinjo/Exclusive Artists Management. For Vicky Jeudy: Hairstylist, Yessenia Reyes. Makeup artist, Frank Guyton/kenbarboza.com. Manicurist, Lisa Logan for Wilhelmina.

**ON THIS PAGE** Jordin Sparks wears a **Ronny Kobo** dress, **Melinda Maria** cuff and bangle, **EF Collection** bangle, **Elizabeth and James** bangle, **Jimmy Choo** shoes and her own nose ring. For clothing details, see Where to Buy.

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# PANTENE

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# WELLNESS IS THE WAY



**N**ot long ago, I had a deep conversation with a colleague about how we often put ourselves last, especially when it comes to our health. She had recently rushed to the emergency room to be at the bedside of one of her dear friends. The friend had landed in the hospital, she believed, because she had been so busy doing for others, she'd failed to focus on her own health and wellness.

As she wondered why so many of us wait until there's a problem before we take action, I asked myself the same thing. I had to admit that, like far too many of us, I've had moments when I've put my health on the back burner. I remembered the times I had procrastinated on finding a new primary care physician, postponed a necessary test or neglected to schedule an appointment because it was "inconvenient."

Now, I've become proactive. I've followed through with important screenings, like my recent mammogram and colonoscopy. Both experiences not only provided relief but also gave me a sense of empowerment to have clarity about my health status. Yes, it's only human for us to think about the what-ifs: What if the doctors find something?

What if I have to make life changes based on the results? But isn't that better than finding yourself on the other side of a health crisis, wondering "if only"?

The fact is the more—not the less—we know, the better prepared we are. That's why I'm so grateful

for the work of the Black Women's Health Study, which is currently in its twentieth year.

The 59,000 participants—who have answered biyearly questionnaires about health issues that disproportionately affect us—have provided invaluable insight for researchers

at Boston University's Slone Epidemiology Center. They have also helped to lay the foundation for life-

style changes we all can make to help lower our risk of illness.

With just a click on your device or desktop, you can visit [bu.edu/bwhs](http://bu.edu/bwhs) to learn more about the organization's life-altering results and work. And, because I know so many more of us are focusing on staying healthy and happy, I'd love to hear what steps you're taking each day to promote wellness in your life, and the lives of those you love.

Stay in touch,

**VANESSA K. DE LUCA**  
Editor-in-Chief

Twitter: [@Vanessa\\_KDeLuca](https://twitter.com/Vanessa_KDeLuca)

Instagram: [vanmommy](https://www.instagram.com/vanmommy)

E-mail: [Vanessa@essence.com](mailto:Vanessa@essence.com)



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- Josalyn Contreras

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WE GOT ESSENCE INSIDER INSIGHT ABOUT SATISFACTION IN THE BEDROOM AND BEYOND. AREAS LIKE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOVED ONES WERE TOPS. YOU ALSO SOUNDED OFF ON THE KEY TO HAVING AN AMAZING TIME BETWEEN THE SHEETS

## A STRONG EMOTIONAL BOND

"As I've gotten older, sex has taken on a level of intimacy that makes almost every time I have it mean so much more."

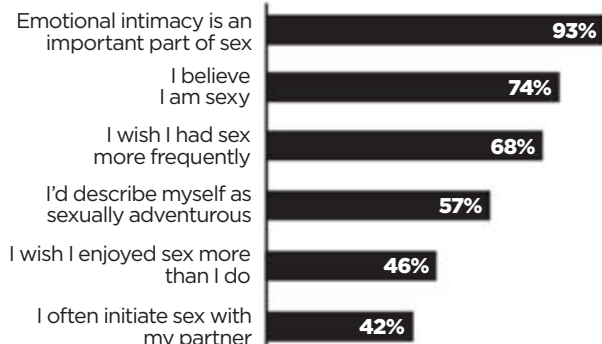
—MELISSA CLARK, STATEN ISLAND, NY

## WHAT GETS YOU TO HAPPY

Insiders cite faith, family and good food as sources of delight. However, work (30%) did not foster the same enthusiasm.



## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE S-WORD!

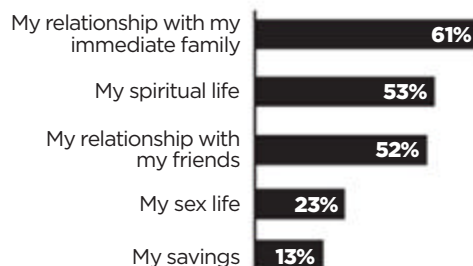


## LOVE

"When you feel the expression of love from your partner through the physical act of sex, it's way better than anything you had with someone you didn't care about."

—ANGELA SIMMONS,  
UPPER MARLBORO, MD

## WHAT MAKES YOU SATISFIED?



## SELF-CONFIDENCE

"I have the most satisfying sex when I feel the best about myself and when I feel desired by my partner."

—SOPHIA RILEY,  
PHILADELPHIA

## COMMUNICATION

"Identifying what each of us enjoys is key to pleasing each other and having a fulfilling sex life. Needs can change over time, so open communication is a necessity."

—DAWN LANGSTON,  
MILFORD, CT

## TRUST

"Trust between partners is the most important factor for great sex. It allows each to explore without fear of judgment. It's the basis for complete satisfaction."

—GUESELLE MIYAO,  
NEW YORK CITY

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Essence Fest, Afropunk, Newport Jazz Festival? Whatever your concert style, chic it up with a hit of fringe, florals or a fresh romper

PHOTOGRAPHY

BY NICHOLAS ROUTZEN

FASHION EDITOR: JOIEE THORPE

## TEXTURE ANALYSIS

### French Connection

embroidery waistcoat, \$398, [usa.frenchconnection.com](http://usa.frenchconnection.com).

### Rebecca Minkoff

"Tanika" top, \$248, [rebeccaminkoff.com](http://rebeccaminkoff.com).

### Zara

trousers, \$80, [zara.com](http://zara.com). **R.J. Graziano**

horn pendant necklace, \$50, [rjgraziano.com](http://rjgraziano.com).

### Kris Nations

"Dulce Fria" necklace, \$95, and "Dulce Canyon" necklace, \$100, both available at [krisnations.com](http://krisnations.com).

### SJP by Sarah

### Jessica Parker

"Lola" heels, \$455, [nordstrom.com](http://nordstrom.com).

# STYLE



## CULOTTE COOL

**Milly for Design-Nation** "You Me Capri" T-shirt, \$40, kohls.com.

**Mara Hoffman** jacquard long shorts, \$216, marahoffman.com.

**Azure Skies for Aritzia** "Synecdoche" belt, \$48, aritzia.com.

**Luana Italy** "Raquel" belt bag (with removable fringe), \$358, luanaitaly.com for info.

**Zara** platforms, \$100, zara.com.

▶ **WELL VESTED**  
**H&M** vest, \$50, hm.com.



▶ **A LEG UP**  
**Rebecca Minkoff** "Summer" sandals, \$450, rebeccaminkoff.com.



▶ **FLOWER POWER**  
**Gucci** sunglasses, \$375, Gucci stores.



▶ **FRINGE FACTOR**  
**Mad Jewels** "Blair" tassel earrings, \$58, shopmadjewels.com.



▶ **PRINTS PLEASE**  
**Raoul** silky top, \$265, lyonandpost.com, and matching cuffed shorts, \$285, similar prints at raoul.com.



▶ **LISTEN IN**  
**Frends** Tahitian pearl headphones, \$265, wearefrends.com.

## ROMPER ROOM

**Cynthia Rowley** jacquard romper, \$298, cynthiarowley.com. **Jimmy Choo** "Cindy" sunglasses, \$395, select Solstice Sunglasses stores. **BaubleBar** "Crystal Mason" ring, \$32, baublebar.com. **Wren and Glory** swirl ring set, \$175, wrenglory.com.



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*It Girl*

# HANNAH BRONFMAN

MOVE OVER, GOOP! WELLNESS ENTHUSIASTS WILL LOVE HBFIT.COM AND ITS FOCUS ON A FIT AND FAB LIFESTYLE

BY PAMELA EDWARDS CHRISTIANI

**ESSENCE:** Tell us about your site, [hbfit.com](http://hbfit.com).

**HANNAH BRONFMAN:** It started as a hashtag on my Instagram. People began calling me HBfit, so I launched the site to document my wellness journey. HBfit has evolved into its own unique community, centered around health, beauty and fitness.

**ESSENCE:** What activewear do you like, and where do you shop for fly workout gear?

**H.B.:** Some of my go-tos for activewear are Live The Process, MICHI, Phat Buddha, Prismsport and APL. I'm obsessed with Bandier in New York City for all things active.

**ESSENCE:** What did you eat today?

**H.B.:** I had a smoothie with greens and protein post-workout, then turkey bacon and an avocado for lunch. I snacked on carrot cake granola throughout the day with an almond matcha latte. Dinner was chicken breast with broccoli rabe.

**ESSENCE:** Your must-have beauty goods?

**H.B.:** For skin care, I'm all about Clinique. My makeup is minimal. I'll use Anastasia of Beverly Hills brow gel, Chanel mascara, Tom Ford blush and Air Repair balm on my lips.

**ESSENCE:** Any advice for couch potatoes who want to look like you?

**H.B.:** Get moving! You don't need any equipment or even have to step outside to break a sweat. There are lots of at-home workouts on [hbfit.com](http://hbfit.com). □



**ZOE KARSSSEN**  
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[bandier.com](http://bandier.com)



**Sporty style in Palm Springs**



**ZARA TEREZ**  
Leggings, \$78,  
[bandier.com](http://bandier.com)



**ANASTASIA BEVERLY HILLS**  
Clear Brow Gel, \$22,  
[sephora.com](http://sephora.com)



**TOM FORD**  
Cream Cheek Color in  
Pink Sand, \$65,  
[tomford.com](http://tomford.com)



**MICHI**  
"Feline"  
Bra, \$129,  
[bandier.com](http://bandier.com)

**SHAKE QUEEN**  
One of  
Hannah's  
healthy  
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## HER INSTA-LIFE!

**Deejaying on the daily**

**Yoga in the Flatiron district**

**Her fab nail art**

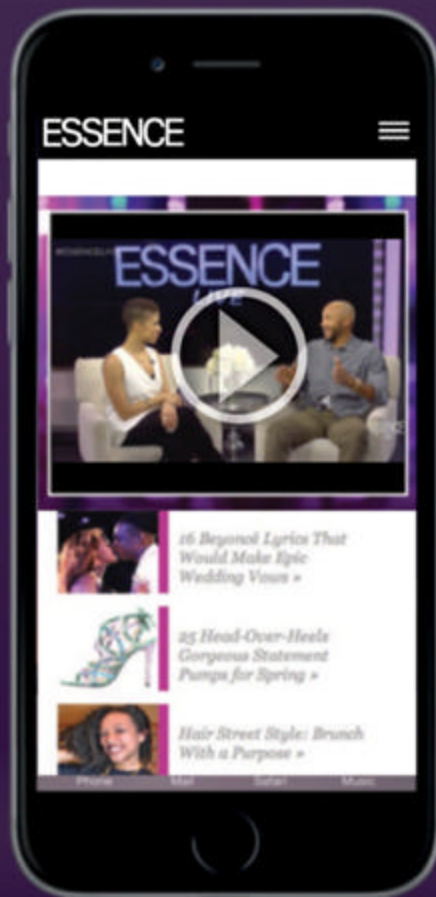
**Hanging out with the family**

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**CHEVROLET**



# Rainbow Coalition

A BOLD LIP IS ALWAYS NICE, BUT A BRIGHT EYE AND FLUSH CHEEKS CAN MAKE IT SO MUCH BETTER

BY PAMELA EDWARDS  
CHRISTIANI

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
WARWICK SAINT

## CRAYOLA COOL

Multiple liner colors? Yes! says makeup maestro Autumn Moultrie, who created the looks in this story. "Use complementary hues side by side," she advises. "Your palette will appear intentional and...the colors will look brighter."

# BEAUTY

## KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR

Moultrie used metallic blue, brown, purple and green eye shadows for this soft, iridescent blend. “Always apply mascara *after* your eye shadow so the lashes don’t look dusty,” she says. Clean up fallout around the eye or cheek with a powder brush. ▸

EXPERIENCE

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## GILDED GLOW

The wash of bronzy tones on the model's eyes and cheeks is both quiet and deliberate, while the poppy lip rounds out the look. The creamy metallic color expands from the lash line to the bottom of the brows, and the bronzer runs practically straight to the ears. Moultrie applied primer to hold the shadow and bronzer in place. She suggests putting on as little foundation as possible and keeping the lower lash line clean and makeup-free. ▷



New York City-based photographer **Warwick Saint** ([warwicksaint.com](http://warwicksaint.com)) was all over the color spectrum capturing bold takes featured in this month's Beauty and Hair sections.



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# COLOR POP!

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## THE FAB FIVE

The limited-edition Giambattista Valli Collection for MAC Cosmetics is on fleek.



**1. MAC Cosmetics**

Split Fibre Dense Face Brush (\$39, maccosmetics.com)

**2. Urban Decay**

Afterglow 8-Hour Powder Blush in (from top) Quickie, Bang and Bittersweet (\$26 each, Sephora)

**3. MAC Cosmetics**

Giambattista Valli Lipstick (\$18 each, maccosmetics.com)

**4. Tom Ford**

Cream and Powder Eye Color in Midnight Sea (\$60, tomford.com)

**5. Aveda**

Petal Essence Eye Definer in Tidepool (\$17, aveda.com)

**6. Givenchy**

Color Kajal Eye Pencil in No.1 Vert Invention (\$26, net-a-porter.com)

**7. Revlon**

PhotoReady Kajal Matte Eye Pencil in Matte Lemon (\$9, Target)

**8. Rue21**

Pink Ice Nail Polish in #086 (\$4, rue21.com)

**9. Ginger + Liz**

Nail Polish in Tiana (\$9, zoya.com)

**10. Zoya**

Nail Polish in Tiana (\$9, zoya.com)

**11. Chanel**

Le Vernis Nail Colour in Precious Beige (\$27, chanel.com)

**12. Sally Hansen**

Hard As Nails Xtreme Wear Nail Polish in Royal Hue (\$3, Walmart)

**13. Nonie Creme Colour Prevails**

Lash Ombre Mascara in Turquoise/Black (\$13, walgreens.com)

**14. Jay Manuel Beauty**

The Everything Mascara in Royale (\$26, HSN)

**15. Make Up For Ever**

Artist Plexi-Gloss in #500, #209 and #305 (\$19 each, Sephora)

**16. Anastasia Beverly Hills**

Liquid Lipstick in Carina, Spicy and Party Pink (\$20 each, anastasiabeverlyhills.com)

**17. YSL**

La Laque Couture Pop Water Nail Polish in Rose Splash, Orange Drop and Fuchsia Rain (\$27 each, yslbeautyus.com)

**18. Charlotte Tilbury**

Beach Stick in Formentera, Es Vedra and Moon Beach (\$45 each, Bergdorf Goodman)

**19. Guerlain**

My Terracotta Hydrating Powder in Natural Brunettes and Natural Blondes (\$55 each, saks.com)

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Writer, mother, book-lover,  
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# 31 DAYS OF BLACK BEAUTY

SHOW OFF THAT GORGEOUS SKIN OF YOURS THIS SUMMER WITH THESE HEAD-TO-TOE BEAUTIFIERS  
BY ANDREA JORDAN



Defy dryness with a super-hydrating serum that seals in moisture.



This refreshing face spritz has calming rose extract.



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It promises to reduce the appearance of cellulite.



The infomercial is on point—this callus smoother really works!



The seven-day system of smoothies, teas and a healthy meal plan aims to help you lose weight without starving.



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The concentrated nutrients in these liquid supplements address all your beauty concerns. ▸



This exfoliating gel helps prevent ingrowns after shaving.



A nicely scented cooling and hydrating lotion for him.



It's a spray-on depilatory that helps reduce future hair growth.

**1. Erno Laszlo** Hydra-Therapy Refresh Infusion (\$100, [ernolaszlo.com](http://ernolaszlo.com)). **2. Jurlique** Bloom Limited Edition Rosewater Balancing Mist Intense (\$65, Sephora). **3. Aquareveal** Gentle Action Water Peel for Body (\$38, [spacenk.com](http://spacenk.com)). **4. Tom Ford** Shimmering Body Oil (\$95, [neimanmarcus.com](http://neimanmarcus.com)). **5. H2O+** Face Oasis Sea Foaming Toner (\$22, Kohl's). **6. GlamGlow** Flashmud Brightening Treatment (\$69, Sephora). **7. NeriumAD** Firming Body Contour Cream (\$110, [mynerium.com](http://mynerium.com)). **8. Amope** Pedi Perfect Electronic Foot File (\$35, [walmart.com](http://walmart.com)). **9. Bikini Cleanse** (\$189, [bikinicleanse.com](http://bikinicleanse.com)). **10. Body Glide** for Her Sun Protection Balm (\$8, [bodyglide.com](http://bodyglide.com)). **11. AmorePacific** Sun Protection Stick SPF 50+ (\$40, Sephora). **12. Gigi** No Bump Shave Gel (\$10, Sally Beauty Supply). **13. Jack Black** Cool Moisture Body Lotion (\$28, [getjackblack.com](http://getjackblack.com)). **14. Bliss** Fuzz Off Foam (\$32, [blissworld.com](http://blissworld.com)). **15. Fountain** Molecules Liquid Supplements (\$28–\$68 each, [deciem.com](http://deciem.com)).

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ROBERT FROST, POET

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16

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19

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20

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22

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26

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29

This in-shower bronzer will give your entire body a sun-kissed glow in minutes.



30

Relish the delightful aroma of brandy and pear while exfoliating.



23

Rehydrate hair and skin after exposure to sun, salt water or chlorine.



24

This rich and buttery cream smells like summer in a jar.



28

Detoxifying charcoal has hit the juice market. Go ahead and get clean inside!



31

Weightless body lotions with out-of-the-ordinary scents like mango nectar, plumeria and pikake are perfect for the season. □



18

Give lackluster legs a bronzy boost with this self-tanning gel.



21

Fight body blemishes with an easy-to-use spray.



25

Sensitive skin types will love this light, moisturizing sunscreen for the face and body.



16. Reserveage Nutrition Très Beauty 3 (\$60, The Vitamin Shoppe). 17. Philosophy The Lemonade Stand (\$26 for set, philosophy.com). 18. The Body Shop Honey Bronze Tinted Leg Mist (\$20, The Body Shop). 19. Burt's Bees Clementine & Calla Lily Sheer Body Lotion (\$10, burtsbees.com). 20. Soap & Glory Orangeasm Exfoliating Body Polish (\$12, beauty.com). 21. Paula's Choice Clear Acne Body Spray (\$24, paulaschoice.com). 22. Decleor Aroma Nutrition Satin Softening Dry Oil and 1000 Grain Body Exfoliator (\$54 and \$42, both at decleorusa.com). 23. Eufora AloeTherapy Moisture Mist for Hair and Body (\$24, eufora.net for locations). 24. Estée Lauder Bronze Goddess Whipped Body Creme (\$45, esteelauder.com). 25. Eau Thermale Avène Hydrating Sunscreen Lotion SPF 50+ (\$30, drugstore.com). 26. Healthy Delights Soft Chews (\$30, GNC). 27. Hey Honey 911 Pro Gel (\$44, heyhoney.com). 28. Juice Generation Beauty Bombs (\$58 for 6-pack, juicegeneration.com). 29. St. Tropez Gradual Tan In Shower Lotion (\$25, Ulta). 30. FarmHouse Fresh Brandy Pear Sea Salt Body Polish (\$34, farmhousefreshgoods.com). 31. Mallie Organics Body Cream (\$32 each, mallie.com).

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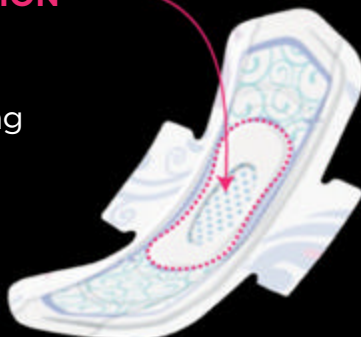
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## SHADES OF WOW

CELEBRITY COLORIST  
KITYAH WRIGHT  
SHARES HER SPICY  
SUMMER PICKS  
BY PAMELA EDWARDS  
CHRISTIANI  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
WARWICK SAINT

### GOING PLATINUM

"Everyone is loving blond right now, including the boys," declares Wright, who styled the looks in this story. What's new? Dark roots, and lucky for us "they look better with deeper complexions." Do consider coloring a human hair wig. "Bleaching the hair is extremely damaging if it's not cared for properly," she preaches. If you're going blond, seek out a pro who can advise you on the right shade and keep your strands on your head.

# HAIR



HAIR : COLOR CODE

## TREADING SOFTLY

Pastels have replaced the true blues, deep greens and primary reds of the last few years. The powdery hues also extend nicely out of the gray craze (see page 42). "These colors are fun and free-spirited," says Wright, who notes that even celebrities like Nicole Richie are embracing the soft-shade wave. The hottest pastels right now are lavender, pink, blue and green. Like going blond, trying these delicate tones requires bleaching, so consult a pro before you lighten up. ▷



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## ▲ **Ambi® Facial Moisturizer SPF 30\***

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# GRAY MATTER

WHETHER YOURS IS GENETIC OR FROM THE BEAUTY SUPPLY STORE, WORK THAT GRAY WITH GREATNESS! **KIYAH WRIGHT** TELLS US HOW



## CURLY GIRL

Pump up the dimension of your coils by highlighting the gray with icy tones.



## GLOSSY GLAM

Gray hair can develop a dull tone. Add shine with a clear gloss from the salon.



## SMART BEAUTY

Use an anti-yellowing shampoo, like Clairol Professional Shimmer Lights, to keep your gray bright.

## THE WRIGHT STUFF

Of course Kiyah gave the trend a try. She added flair with a pop of blue.

Kiyah Wright

“To keep your hair healthy after a major color change, minimize heat usage and commit to weekly conditioning treatments.”

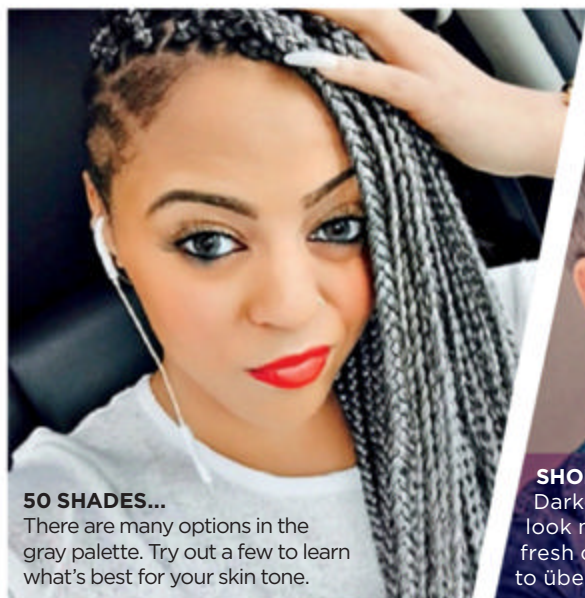
—KIYAH WRIGHT



Clairol Professional iThrive Color Vibrancy Treatment (\$9, Sally Beauty)

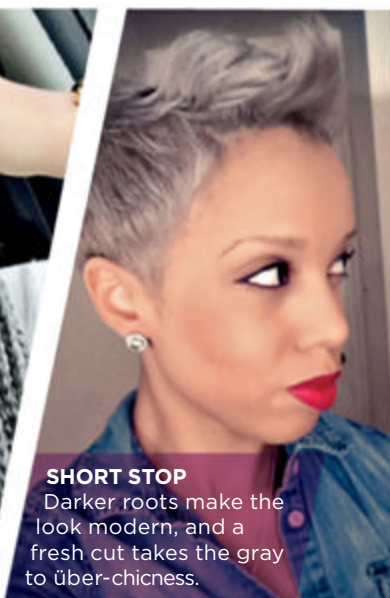
## PROTECT AND PRESERVE

To repair damage from coloring and to lock in your tint, treat tresses with color-safe products like Clairol Professional iThrive Color Vibrancy System. □



## 50 SHADES...

There are many options in the gray palette. Try out a few to learn what's best for your skin tone.



## SHORT STOP

Darker roots make the look modern, and a fresh cut takes the gray to über-chicness.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY OF @BCURLS.MICHELLE; COURTESY OF SUBJECT; COURTESY OF @MRS.LUCYTILLYER; COURTESY OF @VANAROSE.; COURTESY OF @WHATUBROOKLEINAT AND HAIR FROM MINKTRESSES.COM; PETER BARRY, STILLS, COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER.

# ESSENCE OUT & ABOUT

## SEEN ON THE SCENE



Astrid Stawiarz/Getty Images and Margarita Corporation

### BEST IN BLACK BEAUTY

On April 28, 2015, ESSENCE® celebrated the Best in Black Beauty Award winners featuring the most iconic beauty products of all time and the products to watch in makeup, hair, skincare and nails. Beauty industry experts were awarded a Certificate of Expertise while guests enjoyed music by DJ Olivia Dope, cocktails and a pop-up shopping experience where they selected their favorite award-winning products to take home.

**Clockwise from left top to bottom:** 1. Celebrity Makeup Artist, Nick Barose and Editor-in-Chief, ESSENCE® Magazine, Vanessa K. De Luca 2. Actress, Naturi Naughton 3. Actress, Adrienne C. Moore 4. Beauty and Style Director, ESSENCE® Magazine, Pamela Edwards Christiani and Celebrity Hairstylist, Chuck Amos 5. Celebrity Makeup Artist, Sam Fine 6. Celebrity Manicurist, Rachel Shim and TV Personality, Daisy Lewellyn 7. Public Relations Director, UWG, Teresa Lyles Holmes; Public Relations Coordinator, UWG, Alexis Van Eyken; Multi-Cultural Marketing, Colgate Palmolive, Vivian Montoya; Associate Director, Integrated Communications-Media, UWG, Martha Ramos; Editor-in-Chief, ESSENCE® Magazine, Vanessa K. De Luca; Associate Brand Manager, Colgate Palmolive, Salome Jeune; Senior Director, Strategic Planning & Research, UWG, Bruce Kirton 8. Strength of Nature's Social Media Content Coordinator, Melanie Yvette Martin and Marketing Brand Manager, Camila Crews 9. R&B singer, Bridget Kelly 10. African Pride® photo area 11. Colgate® Optic White® refresh station 12. Socialites— Alexis Stoudemire and Amber Sabathia 13. Attendees shopped the winning products to create a customized gift bag 14. African Pride® product display 15. Blogger Award-winner, Whitney White and Essence.com Hair and Beauty Editor, Deena Campbell 16. Best in Black Beauty Awards winners 17. Co-founder, Miss Jessie's Miko Branch 18. African Pride® icon tag wall 19. Colgate® Optic White® product display

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# MEET SUMMER'S NEW SQUEEZE



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# THE VOICE

WHY ANDRA DAY'S RETROFITTED SOUL IS A PERFECT PITCH

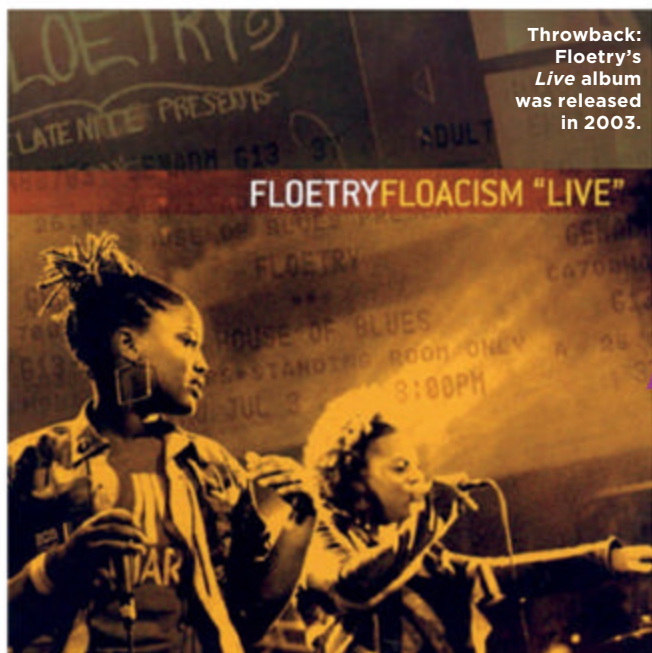
BY CHUCK ARNOLD  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY KWAKU ALSTON

**Y**ouTube singing sensation Andra Day got her old-school R&B education from listening to her father's Motown records. But she never imagined she would have a dinner meeting with one of the label's legends: Stevie Wonder. "He was listening to my music. My whole focus zoomed in on the fact that his headphones were plugged into my iPod, and I was like, *Oh, my God! I can't put anything else into this iPod!*"

Clearly, Wonder liked what he heard: He introduced Day to a producer and even plays harmonica on her debut album, *Cheers to the Fall* (released June 30).

Day is sure to win many more fans with a retro soul-pop sound—Essence Festival-goers can hear for themselves on July 5—that is also influenced by classic jazz vocalists like Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday. The latter inspired her stage name. "I used to love when they would call her Lady Day," explains the 30-year-old, whose real name is Cassandra Batie. "So it's sort of a combination of me and her."

# SCENE



## BACK AT ONE

FOR MARSHA AMBROSIUS AND NATALIE STEWART, REUNITING AS FLOETRY FEELS RIGHT ON TIME **BY CANDICE N. JONES**

In 2002 Marsha Ambrosius and Natalie Stewart burst onto the music scene as the neosoul duo Floetry with such hits as “Say Yes” and “Getting Late.” But after four years and three albums, Ambrosius and Stewart suddenly parted ways, leaving fans wondering what happened. Last December the two appeared to have reconciled as they sang together in London, and a reunion has since been confirmed. (Floetry performs July 5 at Essence Festival.) We caught up with the artists to get to the bottom of their split and learn why they’re reuniting now.

**ESSENCE:** What was the reason behind the breakup?

**NATALIE STEWART:**

Marsha?

**MARSHA AMBROSIUS:**

There were too many, but

it was time. We are two people who came from the same place. It was a friendship. We just managed to find something creatively that worked magnificently together. But you grow, and it was time to be ourselves for a minute. We were mature enough to give each other room to do that.

**ESSENCE:** Was the decision to part ways mutual?

**STEWART:** No. I didn’t have any solo aspirations. My focus was Floetry in the sense of the genre, not even so much in the sense of Floetry, the group. In hindsight I would say everything went exactly as it was supposed to.

“The crowd [at Essence Fest] can expect to lose themselves for sure,” says Ambrosius of the group’s upcoming performance.

**ESSENCE:** Who reached out first about reuniting?

**AMBROSIUS:** It was really a mutual decision. I had a song and I called Nat, like, “Put some poetry to my music.” Reuniting now...it’s just time. I’m thankful that we got to reconnect.

**ESSENCE:** Are there any plans to work on a new single or an album?

**AMBROSIUS:** We don’t do singles. We create moments.

**STEWART:** With content being as important as the musical construction, it means that we make albums, not just singles. Our Floetic ethos isn’t about trying to rob all the answers and trick people into buying things. It’s about a full journey. It’s about creating with intention—as long as it’s Floetic.

**ESSENCE:** Is Floetry back together for good?

**AMBROSIUS:** Music is forever. The reconciliation and reuniting of right now...I’m excited to see what that brings and take it from there.



Today: Natalie Stewart and Marsha Ambrosius

## NO SEX IN THE CITY

A new comedy series tackles celibacy, men and friendship

**Born Again Virgin**



From top: Danielle Nicolet as Jenna; singer Tank stars as sex bait.

Lots of theories have been thrown around about how to land Mr. Right, but TV One’s sure-to-be-a-hit comedy series, premiering August 5, has a fresh take you may not have considered (or may not be willing to try): no sex. Enter *Born Again Virgin*, which follows the misadventures of Jenna (*The Game*’s Danielle Nicolet), a vlogger who has a harrowing history with men and is attempting to take back control of her love life by forgoing sex. (Eva Marcille also stars.) “It’s like you saying you’re not eating chocolate,” says show creator and coexecutive producer Ranada Shepard. “And as soon as you say it, it’s everywhere and even harder to say no to.” Will Jenna be able to resist temptation? Who knows. But we’ll be watching this summer to find out.

—Demetria Lucas D’Oyley

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: COURTESY OF TV ONE (2); PRINCE WILLIAMS/FILMMAGIC; PHYLCIA GHEE.



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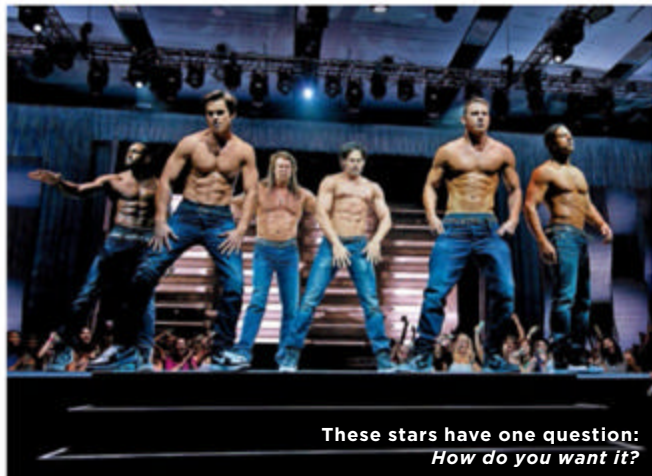
that feeds your hair. Get the styling results,  
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to nurture your **beautiful curls** today!

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# FOR A GOOD TIME, SEE...

THE SUMMER JUST GOT HOTTER. *MAGIC MIKE* RETURNS WITH ADDED SPICE **BY SHARON R. BOONE**



These stars have one question: How do you want it?

Ever since *Magic Mike* shimmied into theaters in 2012, sisters have been demanding more: more muscles, more skin and a little more, ahem, coffee to go with all that (Channing Tatum) cream. Your prayers have been answered. On July 1, most of the crew (including Adam Rodriguez) is back for *Magic Mike XXL*—this time with fresh flava in the fine forms of Stephen “tWitch” Boss and Donald Glover, as well as a scintillating cameo by Michael Strahan. The film follows the fellas as they attend an epic stripper convention, but who cares about the plot? Ladies, get your dollar bills ready because it’s raining men. Hallelujah!

## MATCH THOSE ABS!

Find out which six-pack belongs to whom by taking our *Magic Mike XXL* quiz —S.R.B.



A

Glover (aka Childish Gambino) shows off his grown-ass body



Donald Glover



B

The actor serves up a sweet treat, Latin-style



Adam Rodriguez



C

The dancer pulls off silky smooth moves, like liquid chocolate



Stephen “tWitch” Boss

ANSWERS: A. Rodriguez B. Boss C. Glover



## KING BASQUIAT

JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT’S EARLY WORK, ON VIEW AT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM, GIVES A GLIMPSE OF HIS GENIUS



Clockwise from top left: Basquiat; Untitled (Crown), 1982; Untitled, 1985.

Twenty-seven years after his death, Jean-Michel Basquiat is as relevant as ever. His name is dropped with reverence in Jay Z lyrics; Reebok created a collection of sneakers bearing his artwork and Forever 21 produces T-shirts featuring the crowns that frequently appear on his canvases. And his actual pieces? They sell for up to \$49 million. If you’re not sure what

the fuss is about, stop by the Brooklyn Museum’s exhibition *Basquiat: The Unknown Notebooks* (on display until August 23). It showcases 160 pages of sketches from the Brooklyn artist’s personal journals, more than 30 paintings and two videos. Not to be missed is a rare 23-minute interview that gives insight into his creative process. —D.L.D.

MAGIC MIKE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MICHAEL TULLBERG/GETTY IMAGES; FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES; VALERIE MACON/GETTY IMAGES; C. FLANIGAN/GETTY IMAGES; FRANK OCKENFELS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JONATHAN DORADO/COURTESY OF A CONVERSATION WITH BASQUIAT, MARK WOODS.COM)/© ESTATE OF JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT; © ESTATE OF JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT.



A new guide encourages you to hit your stride in life.

## GET READY FOR YOUR FAITH WALK!

This year marks a special milestone for ESSENCE: our 45th anniversary. To celebrate, ESSENCE's editorial team is releasing *Your Faith Walk: Wisdom and Affirmations on the Path to Personal Power* (Time Home Entertainment, \$19.95). Here, Editor-in-Chief **Vanessa K. De Luca** shares the motivation behind this powerful collection of many of our most inspiring voices

In looking back over four and a half decades of our rich history, the Editors of ESSENCE have chronicled the extraordinary progress Black women have made since the magazine was born. Indeed, ESSENCE women have served in extraordinary professional roles and leadership positions in our nation's capital, from congresswoman to senator, secretary of state to First Lady, and have taken African-Americans' fight against injustice to the media, the streets, the classroom and the courthouse.

ESSENCE women have transformed how global business is done as CEOs and C-suite office holders, and dared to stake their claim as risk-taking entrepreneurs. We have blazed trails in Hollywood, picking up Oscars and dozens of Emmys, and creating, directing and starring in groundbreaking dramas and comedies on screens big and small. We have created an unparalleled music culture, from vibrant neighborhood church choirs to record-shattering international concert tours "womaned" by Grammy Award-winning artists who have rocked the beat of the world.

ESSENCE women have championed a cultural revolution that earned respect and honor for the diverse expressions of Black women's beauty, glamour and style. And we never, ever

“Every word in this book provides evidence of how and especially why we’ve come so far together.”

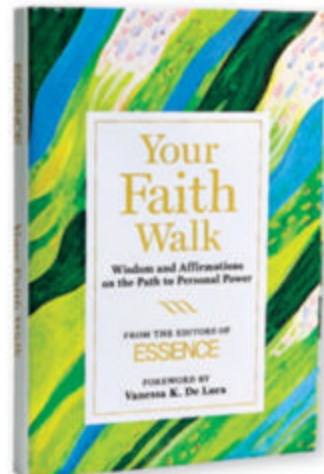
did it alone. We did it with words of encouragement from our sisters in our kitchens and in hair and nail salons, during coffee breaks, Sunday brunch, at church or at family reunions. Because no matter where ESSENCE women gather, we always hold each other's hands and heal each other's hearts.

*Your Faith Walk: Wisdom and Affirmations on the Path to Personal Power* mirrors these experiences and reflects ESSENCE's uncompromising commitment to Black women's empowerment. To produce this volume of our collective wisdom that bears witness to our journey, our editors went back into our archives. It was an amazing odyssey, wherein our team reconnected with words from a profound chorus of voices including Susan L. Taylor, Audre Lorde, Mellody Hobson, Iyanla Vanzant, Oprah and courageous readers just like you. These passages held true then, and hold up now.

Over the years, like you, I have pinned many of these life-changing quotes on my college dorm wall, on my desk at work or my refrigerator at home and continually shared them with

my sisters. Taken together, every word in this book provides evidence of how and why we've come so far—together—and provides sustenance for the march forward into our individual and collective greatness.

*Your Faith Walk* is designed to be that unforgettable whisper in your ear that motivates you to keep going no matter what internal or external challenge you may face. Remember, without you, there is no us. It is our duty, responsibility and joy to remind you that your path is filled with unlimited possibilities and that ESSENCE will always walk with you every step of the way.





# 10

## THINGS WE'RE TALKING ABOUT

BY TAYLOR LEWIS

### 1 REVIVING A CITY

In an effort to jump-start Detroit's struggling economy, **Black technology leaders gathered in April to attend the first PowerMoves@Detroit event.** Hosted by PowerMoves.NOLA, a New Orleans-based initiative aimed at fostering growth among minority entrepreneurs, the conference awarded local techies some \$100,000 to build their businesses and invest in Detroit.

# ISSUES

## 2

## THROUGH THE STORM

After Hurricane Sandy left Daria Rose, 18, and her family homeless in 2012, the high school sophomore threw herself into her schoolwork as an escape. The payoff? Rose, who graduated in May, was **accepted to the seven Ivy League schools** to which she applied. She'll attend Harvard in the fall.

## 3 CLOSING THE GAP

New Orleans has seen big improvements in its education system since Hurricane Katrina. According to Educate Now, a nonprofit for education reform, underperforming schools with large Black populations saw their **average ACT score rise by two points since 2005**. The dropout rate among high school students in the city has fallen to 4 percent from 11 percent.

## 4 SETTING THE STANDARD

Communities with high numbers of Black-owned businesses are **more likely to have lower rates of violence among Black youth**, finds a recent study by the Urban Affairs Review. Researchers suspect that the correlation is due to the presence of positive role models and an increase in job opportunities for teens.

## 5 BLACK GIRL MAGIC

After noticing that her 7-year-old daughter Natalie was frustrated with her natural hair, Florida native Angela Nixon encouraged her to create a hair-positive comic book, *The Adventures of Moxie Girl*. It centers on a Black girl who uses her hair's superpowers to save a library from destruction. Natalie and her mother later entered it into a local competition, where **the comic won first place and a cash prize of more than \$16,000**. The money will be used to publish and sell the book nationwide.



“To the youth of the city, I will seek justice on your behalf. This is a moment. This is your moment. Let's ensure we have peaceful and productive rallies that will develop structural and systemic changes for generations to come. You're at the forefront of this cause, and as young people, our time is now.”

—**Baltimore State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby, at a May press conference where she announced that six officers would be charged in the death of Freddie Gray.**

## 6

CIVIL RIGHTS WATCH



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## POLITICAL STAR

In April, 37-year-old Deesha Dyer was named the **White House's new social secretary**, putting her in charge of coordinating presidential events, such as the White House Governors' Ball, alongside First Lady Michelle Obama. The Philly native, who dropped out of college to pursue community advocacy and hip-hop journalism, returned to school before landing an internship at the White House just six years ago. She is the second Black woman in history to hold the job.

## 8 ON THE RISE

Black women-owned businesses are growing steadily. According to a report by American Express Open and Womenable, an organization dedicated to women's entrepreneurship, there were **1,237,900 businesses owned by Black women in 2014**, a 296 percent jump since 1997. Our businesses today employ 287,100 workers and generate a whopping \$49.5 billion for the U.S. economy.

## 9 HISTORY MAKER

When Julieanna Richardson was a student, she noticed a void in Black archival and oral history. After college, she founded The HistoryMakers, a nonprofit that has compiled **the nation's largest sound and video archive of African-American stories**. The collection is currently housed in the Library of Congress, and earlier this year, Brandeis University received a \$50,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that will help expand The HistoryMakers' reach to colleges across the country.



“If a little girl from North Carolina, who used to tell her grandfather in the fields to lift her up on the back of his mule so she could see, ‘Way up high, Granddaddy,’ can become the chief law enforcement officer of the United States of America, then we can do anything.”

—**Attorney General Loretta Lynch, during her induction ceremony in April.**



For the latest news, follow ESSENCE Features Editor Lauren N. Williams on Twitter @LAURNWILLIAMS.



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AT #UNDOTHEHURT



Erica M. Young ditched her 9-to-5 to design gorgeous bodywear fit for the stars.

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# Be Your Own Boss

IF YOU'VE EVER BEEN AT WORK AND THOUGHT, *I COULD DO THIS ON MY OWN*, NOW MIGHT BE THE TIME TO QUIT YOUR DAY JOB AND PURSUE YOUR PASSION

BY JIHAN THOMPSON  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ROWE

**R**eady to call the shots? We talked to six inspiring women who mixed their on-the-job training with some entrepreneurial grit to chart their own course to success. Consider this your cheat sheet to self-employment.

# MONEY & POWER

## FROM MASS TO LUXURY

Erica M. Young, 33  
Founder, Erica M.  
New York City

**B**efore Erica Young had her intricately detailed hosiery land in the hands of Beyoncé, she spent nearly eight years designing shoes for the licensing company that owned Baby Phat, Phat Farm and Pastry. But the long hours and frequent international trips to factories wore on her. "It was really grueling," says Young. "It got to the point where I didn't even unpack my suitcase when I came home." On her many trips abroad, she began collecting funky tights from places like Hong Kong and Tokyo. "I always knew I wanted to start my own company—I just needed to settle on the right product that I could be happy designing every single day." Now with an expanding bodywear collection and a roster of celeb clients, including Anne Hathaway and FKA twigs, Young has finally found her footing.

- **MAKE YOUR JOB WORK FOR YOU.** "I knew I wasn't going to grow within the company, so learning all the parts of the business became my main goal. I was doing everything from working closely with sales to managing our factories overseas. By the time I started my line, I knew how much inventory to hold and the best way to present the product."

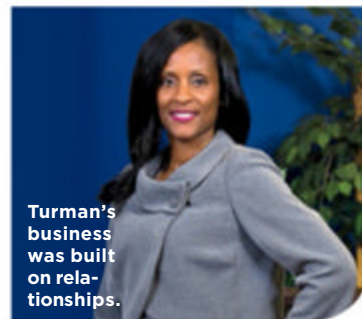
- **TALK TO STRANGERS.** A serendipitous meeting with a woman in an elevator led to Young's first sale. "She ended up being a writer for a fashion Web site and helped me secure my first press coverage in the spring of 2012. Soon after, stores in Zurich and London called to place orders." Now Young works with more than 40 retailers, and sales are rising sharply; she saw a staggering 74 percent increase from 2013 to 2014.

- **GIVE SOME PRODUCT AWAY.** In the beginning, sometimes you have to dole out your goods to get people talking. The tactic paid off in spades for Young, who handed over a few pairs of her tights to a close friend as a thank-you for a favor. A few months later, that same friend (a photographer) was booked on a gig to shoot Beyoncé—and she went to the session wearing a pair. "Beyoncé asked my friend to find out if I could send her some." A couple of Web sites picked up the story of the little-known brand landing a megastar fan, and Young's sales more than quadrupled.

- **PREPARE FOR SLOW BUSINESS.** While some companies experience sustained off-the-chart success, you're far more likely to see growth in fits and starts. "There have been some bad seasons," Young admits. "So you always have to have a strategy. If the A+ boutiques aren't buying, then look to B-list stores. Be prepared to tweak the formula every season, whether you're doing well or not."

## OLD BOSS, NEW CLIENT

Tabatha Turman, 44  
President & CEO,  
Integrated Finance and  
Accounting Solutions  
Woodbridge, VA



Turman's business was built on relationships.

**T**abatha Turman enlisted in the military straight out of high school, and for nearly 20 years she served as a finance officer and consultant. But in 2005, she set her sights on civilian life. "What pushed me to finally transition out of the military was the year I spent in Iraq," says Turman. "We weren't exempt from the attacks—our finance office was actually hit with a mortar round. If I was going to take a risk, I figured it should be building the business that I'd always dreamed of." Three years after setting up shop in 2007, Turman hit the \$1 million mark. Today she runs a multimillion-dollar company with 60 employees.

- **GET YOUR PAST EMPLOYER TO HIRE YOU BACK.** While trying to drum up business, Turman attended a conference put on by the Army. "I sat down next to a woman whose company managed the Army's billion-dollar IT budget and told her my story. Later, she called looking for someone to help track spending. I took the job and we still have the contract today."

- **KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THE CLIENT NEEDS.** After researching how to win contracts, Turman stumbled on an important finding: The government must award a certain number of contracts to women, minorities and veterans. Jackpot: Turman was all three. "When bidding for a job, I always focused on my capabilities first. Then, I'd add, 'Oh, by the way, I can help you meet your small-business minority goals.'"

- **BRANCH OUT STRATEGICALLY.** When clients came to Turman looking for services different from those she offered, she got scrappy and built the company around the needs of the client, branching out into IT and logistics. "I hired people to round out the team in areas that I didn't have expertise in myself," says Turman.

- **TAP INTO EXISTING CONNECTIONS.** When you're just starting out, you don't have a string of client references to fall back on, so you essentially have to sell yourself. "The only thing I could do was leverage my relationships by targeting past mentors and bosses in the Army who had moved into civilian life as well," says Turman. "I also made cold calls. The federal government keeps a database of contracts, so I combed through it and looked for companies that had been awarded work in areas I knew I could do. Then I focused on forming solid partnerships with them." ▶

**“There’s nothing magical about people who have gone from no money to \$1 million or \$20 million—they were just crazy enough to put themselves out there.”**

—TABATHA TURMAN

#summerHOOPS

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## WHEN KEEPING IT REAL GOES RIGHT

Keli Knight, 33; Yondi Morris, 32; Jessica B. Reddick, 32  
Partners, KMR Law Group  
Chicago

**I**n 2011, after a particularly demanding day at her job as a contract attorney, Yondi Morris tweeted that she was ready to start her own firm. Her friend, Keli Knight, who handled property tax cases at another company, responded. “Keli tweeted me back saying, ‘Let’s meet to discuss,’” says Morris. The two women looped in Jessica B. Reddick, a friend and fellow lawyer, and they decided to open their own office with a specialty in entertainment and real estate law. Now, in addition to their firm—where they’ve served more than 80 clients—the trio has launched a legal staffing agency that provides temp workers to big corporations. With two more offices slated for development in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., they’re poised to make an indelible mark on the legal landscape.

- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK.** “We met with as many people as we could think of,” says Reddick. While talking with venture capitalists, the partners realized that being a young, all-female minority firm made them stand out from older White male competitors, so they owned it. “Now we add a dose of our personality to any marketing materials. As a result, we’re able to work with clients who share our vision and mission.”
- **KEEP A SECOND LINE OF INCOME.** There are those entrepreneurs who think, *Either you’re all in, or you’re all out.* But if you’re not quite ready to quit your day job, don’t feel like you have to. Reddick kept working as in-house counsel for a nonprofit for more than two years after KMR officially launched in September 2012, while Knight still takes on legal contracting work to reinforce her safety net.
- **HIRE TO YOUR WEAKNESSES.** “We knew how to be lawyers, but we had to learn how to be entrepreneurs,” says Reddick. After passing the one-year mark, the team hired a consulting firm, with whom they meet weekly, to continue developing strategies to attract new clients and expand the business.



(From left)  
Reddick, Morris  
and Knight

### PRO TIP:

#### LEAN ON FRIENDS.

Every woman we interviewed said that, at some point, her friends were instrumental in getting her biz off the ground, whether it was a pal in PR who could craft a killer press release or an old mentor who could tweak her business plan.



Arps is the design darling of the start-up world.

## USING START-UPS TO START UP

Dani Arps, 31  
Founder, Dani Arps  
New York City

**D**ani Arps is something of a wunderkind in the design realm. After getting her master’s in interior design in 2009, she began working under top creatives in the field. But it became apparent very quickly that Arps—who says she’s always had the entrepreneurial bug—needed to break out on her own. “I think of interior design as three-dimensional art, but when you’re creating art under someone else’s vision it kind of sucks all the love out of what you’re doing,” she says. In 2013, she quit her job as an interior designer for Tonychi and Associates and started taking on clients. Within months, she made a name for herself by designing eye-popping and inviting spaces for budding start-ups (some with several million dollars in seed funding). In 2014, she formed her eponymous design firm; this year she’s on track to make *five times* more than she would have if she were still working for someone else.

- **PREPARE TO LEAP.** “I had about five months’ worth of savings, and I knew that as long as I paid my rent and my student loans I would be okay. The great thing about interior design is that you don’t need much money to start because there’s not much overhead. All you need is a computer and the right programs. Essentially what you’re selling are your services.”
- **DON’T BE AFRAID TO BARTER.** Arps is moving into her first office this year, but to keep costs down she’s renting space from a client who just relocated to larger digs. She’s helping them with design work, and, in return, she’s getting an office at a cut rate.
- **WOW YOUR FIRST CLIENT.** Arps’s first commercial gig was designing a 6,000-square-foot office for the tech school Codecademy, which she’d heard about through a referral agency. It was the largest project she’d ever done on her own, but the company’s execs were willing to take a risk on her when they saw her portfolio and the bold proposal she created for their space. After the job was completed, other start-ups came knocking. “People think there’s a magic trick to it, but there’s really not. All you need is one client to spread your name—but that means you have to do a really good job.” □

Jihan Thompson is a magazine writer and editor in Brooklyn.

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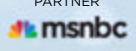
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**Money & Power: Tips for Building a Side Hustle**  
with Kandi Burruss

**Love & Relationships: 5 Keys to Identifying Your Soul Mate** with Sarah Jakes & Touré Roberts

**Money & Power: How To Become A Social Media Ninja**  
with Melinda Emerson

**Healthy Living: Define Your Life**  
with Shaun T

**Healthy Living: A Special Session for Single Moms Raising Sons**  
with Iyanla Vanzant & Dr. Steve Perry

## SATURDAY, JULY 4

**Love & Relationships: Marriage Workshop** with Fawn Weaver

**Money & Power: Strategize to Win**  
with Carla Harris

**Love & Relationships: Dating for Women of Power** with Kelli Fisher & Tana Gilmore

**Style & Beauty: Workshop**  
with India.Arie

**Money & Power: So You Wanna Sing**  
with Kelly Price

**Healthy Living: Hope Beyond Fibroids** with Cynthia Bailey, Gessie Thompson, Tanika Gray Valbrun, Dr. Cheruba Prabakar

## SUNDAY, JULY 5

**Money & Power: College Secrets**  
with Lynnette Khalfani Cox

**Love & Relationships: Workshop**  
with Paul Carrick Brunson

**Money & Power: Become a Cash Flow Queen** with Tanisha A. Sykes

**Money & Power: Lessons From A Leap of Faith** with Shanti Das

**Healthy Living: Workshop**  
with Tonya Lewis Lee

**Style & Beauty: Cool Cat Eye**  
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**STYLE AND BEAUTY** — Get tips on how to rock the latest style and beauty trends and so much more!

### ON THE SECOND FLOOR

**CAREER CONNECTIONS** POWERED BY NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE — Find your dream job, review your resume with top recruiters and get advice on how to build your brand.

**PITCH CITY** POWERED BY POWERMOVES NOLA — Hear entrepreneurs pitch their business plans and support the future.

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GOSPEL  
HOUR OF  
POWER  
11AM-12PM  
DAILY

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**FREE DAILY DOORS OPEN 9:00AM\***

**GREAT HALL | ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER**

Keynotes and panels with the biggest TV personalities, authors and gospel artists.

## FRIDAY, JULY 3

**Host** – Mikki Taylor

**DJ** – Charles “DJ Bambam” Belonge

**Fitness Conversation** with Shaun T

**Hour of Power** ★  
with Anita Wilson, Deitrick Haddon

**A Mother Daughter Journey**  
with Cynthia Bailey & Noelle Robinson, Lynn Whitfield & Grace Gibson, Alice Randall & Caroline Randall Williams; Crystal McCrary (moderator)

**Secrets to Getting the Love and Life You Want**  
with DeVon Franklin & Meagan Good, Flex & Shanice Alexander

**Hurricane Katrina 10 Years Later** with Donna Brazile

**Moms on a Mission: Mothers Turning Tragedy Into Triumphant Change** with Sybrina Fulton

**Race & Reconciliation** with Dr. Monique W. Morris, Judy Reese Morse, Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole

**Black Women at Work** with Patrice Washington, The Honorable LaDoris “Dot” Harris, Deborah Elam, Karla Martin, Monique Greenwood, Carla Harris



MIKKI TAYLOR



CHARLES “DJ BAMBAM”  
BELONGE  
ALL WEEKEND



ANITA WILSON



DEITRICK HADDON



SHAUN T



CRYSTAL MCCRARY



CYNTHIA BAILEY & NOELLE ROBINSON



ALICE RANDALL &  
CAROLINE RANDALL  
WILLIAMS



LYNN WHITFIELD &  
GRACE GIBSON



MEAGAN GOOD &  
DEVON FRANKLIN



FLEX & SHANICE  
ALEXANDER



DONNA BRAZILE



SYBRINA FULTON



DR. MONIQUE W. MORRIS



JUDY REESE MORSE



DR. JOHNNETTA B. COLE



PATRICE WASHINGTON



THE HONORABLE  
LADORIS “DOT” HARRIS



DEBORAH ELAM



KARLA MARTIN



MONIQUE GREENWOOD



CARLA HARRIS

\*Schedule subject to change.



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## SATURDAY, JULY 4

**Keynote Conversation** with Deepak Chopra

**Keynote** with Deepak Chopra & Erica Ford

**Hour of Power** ★

with The Walls Group, India.Arie

**Host** – Shirley Strawberry

**The Steve Harvey Dating Show**

**Mayor's Panel: Solutions in our Cities**

with Mayor Mitchell Landrieu,  
Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson

**#NoJudgmentZone** with Claudia Jordan,  
Mariah HuQ, Karrine Steffans

**Keynote Address** with Reverend Al Sharpton

**Where Do We Go From Here? Black Lives Matter**

with Dr. Steve Perry, LA Senator Karen Carter Peterson,  
Nicole Paultre Bell, Sheinelle Jones (moderator)

**Keynote Address** with Iyanla Vanzant

**MORE TALENT TO BE ANNOUNCED!**



DEEPAK CHOPRA



ERICA FORD



THE WALLS GROUP



INDIA.ARIE



SHIRLEY STRAWBERRY



STEVE HARVEY



MAYOR MITCHELL  
LANDRIEU  
NEW ORLEANS, LA



MAYOR KAREN  
FREEMAN-WILSON  
GARY, IN



CLAUDIA JORDAN



MARIAH HUQ



KARRINE STEFFANS



REV. AL SHARPTON



DR. STEVE PERRY



KAREN CARTER PETERSON  
LA SENATOR



NICOLE PAULTRE BELL



SHEINELLE JONES



IYANLA VANZANT

## SUNDAY, JULY 5 THE 2015 ALL-STAR GOSPEL TRIBUTE



BISHOP LESTER LOVE  
& THE CITY OF LOVE



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MARVIN SAPP



DORINDA CLARK-COLE



CHERYL WILLS



GEORGE POTTS YOUNG  
AND CHURCH FRIENDS



JONATHAN McREYNOLDS



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Convention Center, celebrate our  
2015 All-Star Gospel Tribute honoree

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 Allohn Agbenya Allohn Designs, Carson, CA  
 Abdul Aziz Aziz Fashions, New York, NY  
 George Baah Kwame Palace LLC Fort Worth, TX  
 Kenneth "Ras Tree" Beauchum Aborginal Bling Blam, St.Louis, MO  
 Baba Berthe Muso Masiri, Baltimore, MD  
 Charles Bibbs Studio B, Riverside, CA  
 Jolanda Nzingah Blanchard Sankofa's Child Jewelry, Fort Lauderdale, FL  
 Bridgeja' Baker Creative Jewelry by Bridgeja', New Orleans, LA  
 Carol Bebel Efforts of Grace Ashe' Cultural Arts Center, New Orleans, LA  
 Charlette Boyd Johnson Nailah's, Milwaukee, WI  
 Keenya Brooks Art By Keenya, Fairburn, GA  
 Jayne Cain Jayne's Crafts & Things, Quilts, Coats and Totes, Hempstead, NY  
 Richelle "Ricky" Caiton Afrodity Productions, LLC, Kenner, LA  
 Leroy Campbell Leroy Campbell Originals, Atlanta, GA  
 Sidney Carter Sidney's Creations, Powder Springs, GA  
 Nigel Chickens Zimbabwe Shona Sculpture, Atlanta, GA  
 Henry Osaygefo Colby Timbuktu Art Colony, Ellenwood, GA  
 Karma Colby Karma Soul International, Ellenwood, GA  
 Keith Conner K.C. Graphics Design, Chicago, IL  
 Carl Crawford Collage Illusion, Columbia, SC  
 Najee Dorsey Black Art In America, Columbus, GA  
 Dr. Fouts Jewelry, New Orleans, LA  
 Adam Ecclesiastes Universal Love Jewelry, Macon, GA  
 Kevin Elder K. Elder Art New Orleans LA  
 Cynthia Fearing G3 Relative Art, Los Angeles, CA  
 Juan Felipe Mistura, Atlanta, GA  
 Michelle Fields and Charlene Spence  
 Michelle New York, Brooklyn, NY

Frank Frazier Visions In Black, Dallas, TX  
 Ndeye Gueye Ndeye Fashion, New Orleans, LA  
 Suzette & Kevin Hallman Suzette Art Couture Hats, Philadelphia, PA  
 Walter Lobyn Hamilton Vinyl Record Artist LLC, Indianapolis, IN  
 Grace Anyango Harris The Maasai International, Stone Mountain, GA  
 Bill & Brenda Hart Foo Foo Fashions, Los Angeles, CA  
 Phyllis & Jim Hurley Friends of Uganda, Clinton, MS  
 Cathy Johnson Cathy's Creations, Pearland, TX  
 Michael Johnson Concept.7.Dezignz Fort Wayne, IN  
 Fampodgie Kaba Ngaya African Art, New Orleans, LA  
 Kimani Kamau Tinga Tinga African Art Gallery, Ellenwood, GA  
 Nasi Kedem Baba G Ancient Future and Beyond, Alpharetta, GA  
 Marissa Kendrick Deleay Lashay, Merrillville, IN  
 Damia Khanboubi Noor LLC, New Orleans, LA  
 Abe Lavalais Bamboozle, Alexandria, LA  
 Adrienne Lockett Adrienne Lockett Designs, East Orange, NJ  
 Joyce Lomax Art By Joyce Lomax, Powder Springs, GA  
 Nana Adjoa Long African High Fashion, Lithonia, GA  
 Sharika Mahdi-Neville Art By Sharika, New Orleans, LA  
 Lydell & Cepada Martin Vases with Faces, College Park, GA  
 Stuart McClean Stuart McClean Gallery, Atlanta, GA  
 Donovan McLean Uplift Artworks, Hammond, IN  
 Elginia McCrary McCrary Cultural Art, Chesapeake, VA  
 Whitney Mero Onion, New York, NY  
 Cicely Miller Cicely's Jazzy Art, Frisco, TX  
 Woodrow Nash The Rage Gallery, Akron, Ohio  
 Ona Otite Morona Inc., New York, NY

Kamela Peart Kamela Peart Art, San Francisco, CA  
 Casey Peoples Casey's Art, Chesapeake, VA  
 Dana Todd Pope Dana Todd Pope Fine Art, Chicago, IL  
 Aaron Reed Art By Aaron Reed, Conyers, GA  
 Karen Roache Another Phase by Karen Roache, Orangeburg, SC  
 Harriet Rosebud Rosebud New York, Atlanta, GA  
 Micheline St. Louis Seven Stars Creation, Los Angeles, CA  
 Farris Armand Sears Farris Armand Art, New Orleans, LA  
 Tameka Selders Brown Baby Design (I Love Me Some Us), Richardson, TX  
 Paris (Payne) Smith Studio Paris, Glenn Heights, TX  
 Phillip Snead Rare Image, Baltimore, MD  
 Sylvia Sumter Culture Beautiful, Columbia, SC  
 Karin Turner KarinsArt.com, Oakland, CA  
 Sia Walker S.I.A. Is Rare Honey, Tallahassee, FL  
 Greta Wallace Simply Greta, Brooklyn, NY  
 Minnie Watkins Minnie Watkins Fine Art, Chicago, IL  
 Janice Wilbourn-Woods & Carolyn Wilbourn Wilbourn Sisters Designs, Lithia Springs, GA  
 Shirley Wilfred Wilfred Designs, Folsom, LA  
 Jay Wilkerson Windows to Africa, Milwaukee, WI  
 Kevin Williams K.A. Williams Fine Art, Lithonia, GA  
 Ragan Grillier Willis Angel Bands by Grillier Willis, New Orleans, LA  
 Geraldine Woolard Jerre's Ethnic Accessories, Lawnside, NJ

## SHOPS AT ESSENCE® - CELEB ZONE

Deepak Chopra  
 Bernadette Stanis — Thelma of Good Times  
 Nephew Tommy and Shooz & Bootz  
 Perfect Hair Collection | Steve Harvey  
 Charlie Wilson  
 Chef Leon West  
 The Trayvon Martin Foundation



**ESSENCE® EATS** Grab a table at the convention center and taste the authentic cuisine of New Orleans' finest restaurants.

4 Of Us  
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 Atlanta Seafood Company  
 Bennette Place Catering  
 Boswell's Jamaican Grill  
 Cynthia Lain  
 Douglas New Orleans Red Beans & Rice & Pecan Pralines  
 Down Home Creole Cookin'  
 LaDelyo's Creole Catering, LLC

Lamar's Famous Creole Style Wings  
 LCD Catering  
 Loretta's Authentic Pralines  
 Ma Momma's House of Cornbread,  
 Chicken & Waffles  
 Minnie Pearl Pies & Pastries  
 Ms Dee's Catering Cuisine LLC  
 Palmer's Jamaican Cuisine  
 The Praline Connection Restaurant

Three L J's Cafe  
 Bairou Cuisine Catering Services  
 Lamar's Famous Creole Style Wings  
 Crepes a la Cart  
 Walker's Seafood  
 Lagniappe Cuisine, LLC  
 Joe & TaTa Cajun Cafe & Lounge  
 Stufhapn Catering...Fried Catfish and Stufcrab



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**COMMUNITY CORNER** Raise awareness and support for local and national community-based non-profit organizations.

100 Black Men, New Orleans, LA  
 American Heart Association, Dallas, TX  
 Anthony Bean Community Theater, New Orleans, LA  
 Ausar Auset Society Southwest Region, New Orleans, LA  
 BackStreet Cultural Museum, New Orleans, LA  
 Bayou Classic / NOCCI, New Orleans, LA  
 Bibby Gumbo Baby Book Club, New Orleans, LA  
 Black AIDS Institute and the Louisiana Health Department  
 Columbia College, Chicago, IL  
 Commis Culinary Cafe School, New Orleans, LA  
 Community Book Center, New Orleans, LA  
 Disney Dreamers Academy, Lake Buena Vista, FL  
 Dress for Success New Orleans  
 Fashion Week of New Orleans Foundation, New Orleans, LA  
 Fearless Poets, Alexandria, LA  
 Fight Colorectal Cancer, Alexandria, VA  
 Florida Coastal School of Law Foundation, Jacksonville, FL  
 Gideon's Promise, Inc., Atlanta, GA  
 Green For All, Green The Church, Oakland, CA  
 Hope for Haitian Children Foundation, Inc. New Orleans, LA  
 Healthy Start, New Orleans, LA  
 High Voltage, Inc., New Orleans, LA  
 Hormone Health Network from the Endocrine Society, Washington, DC  
 Howard University Alumni Association (HUAA), Washington, DC  
 Human Rights Campaign, Washington, DC  
 Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, St. Paul, MN

Jackson State University, Jackson, MS  
 Katrina National Memorial Park Charitable Foundation, New Orleans, LA  
 Kicks 4 Kids, New Orleans, LA  
 Lion Man Foundation, New Orleans, LA  
 Louisiana Center for Health Equity, Baton Rouge, LA  
 Louisiana Organ Procurement Association (LOPA), Metairie, LA  
 Margaret B. Smith ESSENCE Magazine Collection, New Orleans, LA  
 Metropolitan Human Services District, New Orleans, LA  
 NASA, Stennis Space Center, Biloxi, MS  
 National Black MBA Association, Chicago, IL  
 National Congress of Black Women, New Orleans, LA  
 National Council of Negro Women, Washington, DC  
 National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, Fairfax, VA  
 Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, South Africa  
 New Orleans Association of Black Social Workers, New Orleans, LA  
 Operation HOPE, Los Angeles, CA  
 Oxford University Press, New York, NY  
 Play Like A Girl, Frisco, TX  
 St. John #5/Camp ACE, New Orleans, LA  
 St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN  
 SCORE Association, New Orleans, LA  
 Sisters Outreach Inc., Gretna, LA  
 The Trayvon Martin Foundation, Miami Gardens, FL  
 Urban Mediamakers, Norcross, GA  
 U.S. Department of the Treasury-Making Home Affordable Program, Washington, DC

Check out even more vendor sights, sounds and excitement at the The Shops at ESSENCE® with special pop-up experiences from our Festival partners.



\*Vendors are subject to change.

Shops at ESSENCE® is produced by Montana Productions LLC (MPL), New Orleans, LA



## LOVE TO SHOP? EAT? SHARE?

Shop your favorite authentic food, art, fashion and jewelry. Be a part of the community at the ESSENCE Community Corner and meet our "Vendors of the Month."



### ESSENCE' EATS ANTOINE'S BAKERY

At the **Antoine's Bakery** booth, one should expect a unique and unexpected taste of New Orleans with a special combination of flavor, flare and southern charm.



### ARTS & CULTURE MARKETPLACE CHARLES BIBBS

**Charles Bibbs'** work displays a unique, strong and stylized quality done in a combination of abstract and realistic interpretations of contemporary subjects that are beautifully fused into multifaceted ethnicity, larger-than-life images.



### COMMUNITY CORNER NASA

Visit the Community Corner to learn about **NASA**, and their developing Space Launch System, an advanced launch vehicle for a new era of exploration into deep space!

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Join us as we celebrate the taste of Coca-Cola® and NOLA cuisine at the 2015 ESSENCE Festival®! Visit [www.cokeessencefest.com](http://www.cokeessencefest.com) to share your favorite food moments and join us at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center to stay refreshed all weekend!

[www.cokeessencefest.com](http://www.cokeessencefest.com)



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Ford is proud to return to the ESSENCE Festival® to celebrate a weekend of music, culture and empowerment. Visit the Ford booth to see your favorite artists and experience our fun to drive, fuel-efficient lineup.

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## LOVIN' > HATIN'

Visit the McDonald's booth for free concerts and McCafé® beverage samples\*. McDonald's is proud to celebrate the achievement of African Americans at the 365Black Awards, Friday, July 3rd in the New Orleans theater at the ESSENCE Festival®.

**See 365Black.com for details.**

\*While supplies last.



## WE ARE ALL TOGETHER BEAUTIFUL

Join in a spirit of unity with P&G's *My Black is Beautiful* and brands like COVERGIRL, Pantene and Olay for a weekend of empowerment, complete with beauty makeovers and more. Come celebrate your beauty at the 2015 ESSENCE Festival®.

[www.myblackisbeautiful.com](http://www.myblackisbeautiful.com)



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Our Festival partners are spreading the love for the 2015 Festival in New Orleans with the hottest stars, celebrity meet and greets, magical make-overs, awesome giveaways, the chance to enter to win a 2016 Ford Mustang and much more all for you. Get more information and see what's happening on [Essence.com/festival/sponsors-partners](http://Essence.com/festival/sponsors-partners).



#### THE NEXT BIG THING IS HERE

The Samsung Galaxy Experience is coming to the 2015 ESSENCE Festival®! Visit us at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center to check out the new Galaxy S6, experience the Samsung Gear VR, win tickets to the Superdome concerts, and more.

[www.samsung.com](http://www.samsung.com)



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- Make fun Festival photo cards and share them with your friends on social.
- Keep up with the best photos and Tweets from #EssenceFest.
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KEVIN HART  
**WHAT  
NOW?  
TOUR**

**THURSDAY • JULY 2, 2015**

NEW ORLEANS | LOUISIANA

**8:45PM**

AT THE SUPERDOME

GET TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION AT  
[ESSENCE.COM/NOWPLAYING](http://ESSENCE.COM/NOWPLAYING)



**LECRAE | 7:00PM**



**TREY SONGZ | 7:40PM**

**TICKETS  
ON SALE  
NOW!**

**ESSENCE NOW PLAYING**  
**THURSDAY • JULY 2, 2015 ► CONCERT**

DOORS OPEN AT 6PM **LOUISIANA SUPERDOME**

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From Hip-Hop to Caribbean, Soul to Pop and R&B, you are sure to party all night long. Experience surprise cameo performances, comedy, crowd-pleasing DJ sets by Doug E. Fresh, the largest line dance moments and much more! You don't want to miss the 2015 ESSENCE Festival® concerts.



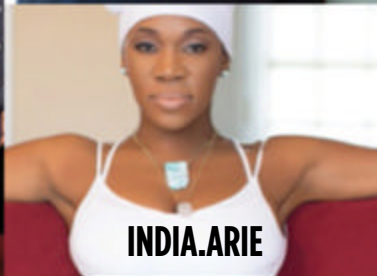
**MAZE FEATURING FRANKIE BEVERLY**



**CHARLIE WILSON**



Main Stage Host: **NEPHEW TOMMY**



**INDIA.ARIE**



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**FRIDAY, JULY 3 | YOUR NEW ORLEANS HOMECOMING!**



### THE ART OF HIP-HOP SUPERLOUNGE

Doug E. Fresh  
Slick Rick



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### HOT RIGHT NOW SUPERLOUNGE

Nico + Vinz  
Adrian Marcel



### NOW PLAYING SUPERLOUNGE

Kindred The Family Soul  
Goapele  
Luenell



### FOR THE LOVE OF R&B SUPERLOUNGE

Kelly Price  
Avery\*Sunshine

(Shown from Left to Right)



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THE  
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**BEENIE MAN & THE  
ZAGGA ZOW BAND**

**SATURDAY, JULY 4 | YOUR JULY 4TH SUPERDOME PARTY!**



**THE ART OF  
HIP-HOP  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Kool Moe Dee  
Mystikal



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**HOT RIGHT NOW  
SUPERLOUNGE**

*Esperanza Spalding presents:*  
EMILY's D+EVOLUTION  
Mali Music  
Sevyn Streeter



**NOW PLAYING  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Raheem DeVaughn  
Elle Varner



**FOR THE LOVE OF R&B  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Bilal  
Tank & The Bangas  
Tonya Boyd-Cannon

(Shown from Left to Right)



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PACKAGE INCLUDES THE BEST SEATS IN THE SUPERDOME, ENTRY INTO OUR VIP  
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YOUR  
TICKETS  
TODAY!**



**KENDRICK LAMAR**



**MARY J. BLIGE**



**TROMBONE SHORTY  
& ORLEANS AVENUE**



**FLOETRY**

**SUNDAY, JULY 5 | THE HIP HOP & R&B DON'T STOP!**



**THE ART OF  
HIP-HOP  
SUPERLOUNGE**

MASE  
Dumpstaphunk  
Dee-1



Go Further

**HOT RIGHT NOW  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Lianne La Havas  
SZA  
Andra Day



**NOW PLAYING  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Robert Glasper  
Jeff Bradshaw  
Tweet



**FOR THE LOVE OF R&B  
SUPERLOUNGE**

Eric Roberson  
Teedra Moses

(Shown from Left to Right)



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DJ CASSIDY



SPINDERELLA



BIZ MARKIE



FUNKMASTER FLEX



# ESSENCE Day Party SERIES



DJ DRAMA

**SINGLE DAY TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**

**JULY 2-5 | 1-5PM DAILY**

**AT THE SUGAR MILL NEW ORLEANS**

Purchase your single day tickets to the Official ESSENCE® Day Party Series in New Orleans July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend featuring the hottest celebrity DJs.

**THURSDAY, JULY 2**

DJ Drama  
Biz Markie

**SATURDAY, JULY 4**

Spinderella

**FRIDAY, JULY 3**

Funkmaster Flex  
Biz Markie

**SUNDAY, JULY 5**

DJ Cassidy

**GENERAL ADMISSION PRICE: \$42.50** per day

**VIP ADMISSION PRICE: \$125** per day  
(includes VIP seating, complimentary cocktails and food)

Get more information on tickets at  
[Essence.com/FestivalDayParty](http://Essence.com/FestivalDayParty)



**FREE ESSENCE® EATS FOOD TRUCK FAIR**

**11:30AM-6:00PM DAILY**

**GET A TASTE OF NEW ORLEANS OUTSIDE THE SUGAR MILL!**

Come join us at the **FREE ESSENCE® Eats Food Truck Fair** outdoor experience as we serve up a taste of New Orleans with a selection of authentic New Orleans dishes, cooking demos, music, and samplings all weekend long!

# THE BIG BREAK POWER PITCH

Join us to see four amazing PowerMoves.NOLA entrepreneurs pitch to win \$25,000.  
Visit The Big Break on Friday, July 3rd at 1:30pm at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center  
on Centerstage at the 2015 ESSENCE Festival® presented by Coca-Cola®.



**Kelli Meade**  
gemphones.com



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# ORANGE LIKE US





THESE  
ACTRESSES OF  
*ORANGE IS THE NEW  
BLACK* HAVE STOLEN OUR  
HEARTS. NOW BACK FOR  
A THIRD SEASON, THE  
STARS BEHIND OUR FAVE  
CHARACTERS SHARE  
WHAT THEY LOVE ABOUT  
THEIR BODY, MIND  
AND SPIRIT

BY AKIBA SOLOMON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DENNIS LEUPOLD  
STYLING BY JAMES KNOX

Based on the best-selling memoir by Piper Kerman, one of Netflix's first original shows, *Orange Is the New Black*, was an instant hit when it debuted in 2013. The highly binge-watchable dramedy revolves around Piper Chapman, a self-involved thirtysomething WASP imprisoned for laundering drug money for her girlfriend. But any *OITNB* fan can tell you that the real strength of this groundbreaking series is its remarkable cast of characters led by actresses Uzo Aduba, Danielle Brooks, Laverne Cox, Vicky Jeudy, Adrienne C. Moore and Samira Wiley.

**A**s each episode unveils the stories behind drug queens and killers, stalkers and credit-card thieves, and drug mules and robbers, *OITNB* has shown women you seldom see on the big or little screen because they have curves or dark skin or gaps in their teeth or short naturals. With season three's episodes now streaming, here's how six members of the *OITNB* ensemble cherish themselves.

#### ADRIENNE C. MOORE (Black Cindy), 34

Moore started her career in Atlanta maintaining corporate sponsorships for the Essence Festival (yep, this ESSENCE). After a few years of full-time work, acting workshops, auditions and community theater, she got laid off. "I had been praying to leave my job, but like most of us, I couldn't afford to make that kind of transition," she says. The layoff, however, pushed Moore to move to New York City to get a master's degree in acting and do commercials and voice-overs. The rest is history.

**How I stay in love with my body:** Every morning I look at myself in the mirror, touch myself and say, "I love my breasts. I love my stomach. I love my legs, my thighs, my butt, my feet, my arms, my face just the way they are." It's been a journey for me with my body, so I try to love it the way it is.

**I'm an athlete who hates the gym:** My dad was a coach, so, quite naturally, his three kids played sports. The first one I ever learned was golf, and in high school I ran track and played varsity basketball, softball and tennis. Participating in sports is a great way to stay in shape, because I don't like going to a gym. On a good week, I do one or two days in a gym and swim or play basketball on the other days.

**I feel sexy when I sweat:** There's this bad myth that Black women don't want to mess up our hair. I love to sweat! I enjoy taking a nap in the steam room for a good 30 or 45 minutes. It's great for your pores and your immune system.

**Sexiness is an inside job:** We place so much emphasis on defining what sexy is by physical appearance, but I think it's a manifestation of one's inner confidence and authenticity. Really talking to someone, looking each other in the eye and having a conversation that isn't plastic, is sexy.

#### VICKY JEUDY (Watson), 34

After being a semifinalist in the Miss New York USA beauty pageant, the Queens native went on to study theater at SUNY New Paltz. But after graduation, Jeudy split her time between working as a program analyst for the government

and training to be a fitness instructor. She then landed a position as a corporate fitness instructor but was later laid off. That's when she decided to pursue acting wholeheartedly. Within a year, she won the role of Watson.

**I step in the name of love:** Even though it's old-school, stepping is such a great workout. The fun comes in when the instructor calls out the different moves. I get a high.

**My curiosity makes me sexy:** I'm always willing to learn, grow and evolve. I love that I'm willing to change, even though it hurts. It just means humbling myself.

**I keep things simple:** I really like a solid, minimal look. In the summer, I wear a nice, clean white tank top, fitted jeans, heels and hoops. I think it's a timeless look.

**I'm a proud Haitian:** My family is from Haiti, and I went to Port-au-Prince about six months after the earthquake. A lot of people were still living in tents, but I felt a peace, a joy about them. In Haiti, if you can drink a whole can of soda by yourself, you pretty much have your finances together. One of the neighbors had a party where every single person had a can of soda. Despite the earthquake and tragedy, they were able to find happiness in their daily lives.

#### SAMIRA WILEY (Poussey), 28

Wiley began acting at Washington, D.C.'s prestigious Duke Ellington School of the Arts (famous alums include Dave Chappelle and Meshell Ndegeocello). Right after graduation, she was rejected from every arts college she applied to. After spending two years studying at Temple University, she eventually got into Juilliard. Wiley was bartending when she snagged her *Orange* role, and she continued serving drinks throughout season one. When fans kept showing up at her job she realized that she'd arrived.

**I am not my hair:** I cut off my fro about nine years ago because I was transitioning into acting full-time. Many women tell me they want my hairstyle but are too scared [to make the Big Chop]. Others have said I've inspired them to do it. I'm sure that whenever the amazing journey of this show is over, I'll probably grow my hair back.

**I celebrate my contradictions:** When some fans see me all done up in a dress, they'll go online to say I'm not being who I am or they like me better the other way. But I grew up in church and wore dresses every Sunday; they make me feel amazing. I'm not dressing up because I have to but because it makes me feel good and is a part of me too.

**I'm big on eye contact:** Confidence is so sexy. I always >



Adrienne C. Moore



“Every morning I tell myself, ‘I love my breasts, stomach, legs, thighs...just the way they are.’”

—ADRIENNE C. MOORE



Vicky Jeudy



Samira Wiley





“

Looking back,  
I spent so much time  
hating myself...I  
should have always  
been living my life.” ▸

—LAVERNE COX

For all  
clothing  
details,  
see Where  
to Buy.

“  
There’s not a selfie  
I take where I’m not  
smiling wide. I feel  
as if I’m making up  
for lost smiles.”

—UZO ADUBA



Laverne Cox



Uzo Aduba



Danielle Brooks

make eye contact with people. A lot of times people think I'm coming on to them. They're like, "She likes me," and I'm like, "No, I'm just trying to connect with you."

**I can hang with the boys at the gym:** I try to run three or four miles at least two or three times a week and lift weights. I like going to the parts of the gym where only men exercise. I'm a little overly ambitious sometimes. I'll wonder, *Can I pull myself up here?* I won't know, but I'll try and hope I don't fall down.

## UZO ADUBA (Crazy Eyes), 34

The daughter of "very traditional" Nigerian parents, Boston-born Aduba always thought she would pursue a career in law. But at the urging of a high school drama teacher, she majored in classical voice at Boston University and eventually found her way to Broadway. Aduba made her TV debut on *Blue Bloods* after landing *Orange*. The risk of doing a show on a brand-new platform paid off: Aduba has won two Screen Actors Guild Awards and an Emmy.

**I love my smile:** For the majority of my first 18 years, I hated my gap. My mom would tell me that in Nigeria, it's a sign of beauty. I was like, "We're in Massachusetts." While taking pictures for my school portrait, the photographer asked me why I only smiled in between shots. I told him I didn't like my gap, and he was like, "I think you have a beautiful smile." It was a super-simple statement, but it really hit home. Today there's not a selfie or personal photo I take where I'm not smiling wide. It sometimes feels as if I'm making up for lost smiles.

**Running makes me proud:** I ran track and field in high school and college, and I was a competitive figure skater for ten years. As an adult I've done two marathons. As I ran them, I would say to myself, "Just keep going. You can do this." I carry that with me when I'm on the set for *Orange* and when I'm filming a movie.

**I'm a hair chameleon:** I love to play with my hair. I wear it natural, I wear it straight, I wear extensions. It's amazing how your hair can reflect your personality. My hair feels like my signature sometimes.

**Smarts are sexy:** I think confidence, intelligence and quick wit are sexy.

## LAVERNE COX (Sophia), 30

The Mobile, Alabama-born actress started her TV career on VH1's reality show *I Want to Work for Diddy*. She didn't end up working for Sean Combs, but the trans advocate and producer can claim some serious firsts: Cox is the first openly transgender person to be nominated for an Emmy in acting and the first trans woman of color to produce and star in her own TV show, VH1's *TRANSForm Me*. Bonus: *Time* magazine put her on its cover, making her the face of the transgender movement.

**I learned to love my full lips:** I adore them. The funny thing is, they were this size before the rest of my face filled out, so the kids used to call them "coffee coolers." Now people are spending tons of money to have lips like these.

**I've made nice with my weight:** About a year ago, I lost 17 pounds. Then I gained it back plus five. Much of it was stress, the pressure of being the face of an entire community.

I'm just trying to love myself more, and that means eating better. It also means that when I do have extra pounds, I have to love that too.

**If my mirror could talk:** This is intense, and it's hard. What I've been doing is looking in the mirror and listing all the things I have an issue with and then saying, "This is beautiful." I just go down the list and tell myself, "You have to accept that this is you today." I make time to do this.

**Bye, negative thoughts:** Ten years ago I would say to myself, "I'm fat and ugly," but I look at pictures now and it's like, "Girl..." Looking back, I spent so much time hating myself, and I was perfectly lovely. I mean, I am above average in looks! [*Laughs*] I should have always been living my life.

## DANIELLE BROOKS (Taystee), 25

Brooks was raised in Greenville, South Carolina, by a minister mama and deacon daddy. A lifelong actress (hello, church plays!) and singer, Brooks went to Juilliard at 17 and landed her *OITNB* role a year after she graduated. Brooks says being on the show has helped her feel more confident. And the prison scrubs don't hurt either: "The beauty of *Orange* is that it shows all of us in our uniqueness. Also, we're in jumpsuits, so it kind of mentally saves us from torturing ourselves with trying to look like somebody else." [*Laughs*]

**My size is just fine:** Being my size [in this industry] is so rare, but regular people look more like me than runway models. To show beauty in a different way really lights me up inside. That's so cheesy, but it does. I'm not saying I can't improve and be better, and I'm not saying one day I might be a size 6, but right now I love who I am, and that should be accepted by the world as well.

**I feel gorgeous on the job:** I'm glad I started out my career on *Orange* because being in a group of women who are embraced for being different, where every woman loves herself, helps me to say, "Dani, you're perfect the way you are." The show has given me that gift of realizing that I'm enough just the way I am, with my skin complexion, with my body, with my hair, with everything someone else might call a flaw. That's been a beautiful thing.

**I'm a leading lady in life:** This year, at Black Girls Rock, director Ava DuVernay said that every day you should walk out of your house like the leading lady in your own film. That really stuck with me, because when someone meets me they should feel my presence. I'm not always the most confident; sometimes I still haven't stepped into this thing that is fame or gotten used to all the attention from the public. But Ava's words reminded me, "Yes, I'm supposed to be here."

**We're not a trend:** People may look at it this way, but I'm ready for shows like *Orange* to be permanent in this entertainment business. It's time for us to do that, not only with Black people but with transgender people, Indians, Asians—every group needs to be represented. □



**Akiba Solomon (@akibasolomon)** is a Brooklyn writer and the editorial director of *Colorlines*. She's the coauthor of *Naked: Black Women Bare All About Their Skin, Hair, Hips, Lips, and Other Parts*.

A full-page photograph of Jordin Sparks sitting on the edge of a white rooftop. She is wearing a bright pink jacket over a pink leotard and white sneakers. She is holding a black and red soccer ball in her right hand, which is raised. The background is a clear blue sky.

# sexy SPORTY sparks

FIRST THERE WAS *IDOL*, THEN BROADWAY  
AND *SPARKLE*. NOW THERE'S NEW MUSIC,  
A NEW MAN AND THAT HOT BODY.  
JORDIN SPARKS IS GROWING UP

BY PAMELA EDWARDS CHRISTIANI  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG LOTUS  
FASHION EDITOR: JOIEE THORPE

## Body of Work

**Milly** coat. **Ronny Kobo** top. **Roksanda Ilincic** bikini bottom. **Effy** diamond and emerald ring. **Elizabeth and James** gold bangle. **EF Collection** diamond triangle bangle. **Nicholas Kirkwood** sandals. Nose ring (worn through-out), subject's own.

Opposite page:  
**Moschino Cheap and Chic** moto jacket and matching dress.  
**Miu Miu** jewel sneakers.  
**Elisabeth Weinstock** "España" soccer ball. >



## Force of Nature

**Cynthia Rowley** wet suit.  
Vintage **Guy Okazaki**  
surfboard.

Opposite page: **ICB** dress.  
**B.Tempt'd** bra. **Melinda**  
**Maria** earrings. ▷



*“I’ve got my own  
kind of sexy...I’m  
good the way I am.”*





## Right Here, Right Now

**Michael Michael Kors** top. **Betsey Johnson** tank. **Barbara Bui** trousers. **Elizabeth and James** cuff. **Miu Miu** sneakers.

Opposite page: **T by Alexander Wang** top. **Elizabeth and James** skirt and briefs. **Dior** sunglasses. **Elisabeth Weinstock** “Manila” boxing gloves. **DKNY** sneakers.

For details, see  
Where to Buy.

Ask anyone their first thoughts on Jordin Sparks and you'll get “*American Idol* winner” or “That young pretty girl who sings.” Ask Sparks how she defines herself and she'll say, “I’m coming into my womanhood.” These days life is sweet: She’s moved to Los Angeles, and there’s that new man all over her Instagram (more about him later). And this summer we’ll hear her gorgeous voice again, thanks to the release of her third album, *Right Here, Right Now*.

“It was so refreshing to go into the studio and make whatever I wanted,” Sparks says. Her producer, Salaam Remi (known for his magical touch with such artists as Amy Winehouse, Miguel, Nas and many others), encouraged her to experiment, and that she did. There are hip-shaking beats, like one featuring 2 Chainz (“Double Tap”), along with emotional ballads (“Tell Him That I Love Him”) to remind her fans that her heartbreaks are real and that she makes mistakes. “I was recording before, during and after my very public breakup [with Jason Derulo], so there are a lot of different feelings on this record,” she admits with a sigh.

That said, Sparks is crystal clear that Derulo is old news. “I hope he has a good life and finds someone who makes him happy. I really do,” she professes. And what of the reported new boo, rapper Sage the Gemini? “My dad told me that a man

should be an amazing bonus to your already meaningful life.” Our guess is that Sage is bringing the amazing to the table.

But having a special someone isn’t the only thing making her glow. There’s a lightness to Sparks that conveys an admirable level of self-acceptance for a 25-year-old. Then there’s also a literal lightness—she has kept 50 pounds off her 5-foot, 10-inch frame for the past five years. “I didn’t do anything crazy. My goal was simply to be a healthy 21-year-old.” Sparks started walking and embraced a different relationship with eating. “I had to figure out if I was eating because I was hungry or just bored, or habitually eating because the food was in front of me.” After losing 30 pounds, she plateaued, so she stepped up her cardio and got a trainer. She dropped 20 more pounds.

Sparks loves Jesus, but she also loves twerking. “I will shut down a club!” she says emphatically. “I’ll body-roll and twerk, all in good fun. I think I still have this America’s sweetheart, girl-next-door type of thing, and I love that. But girls next door like men too,” she says. So she’s mindful of the fine line between being an example to her younger brother and cousins (“They’re watching me”) and being a woman. “Somebody else’s sexy isn’t going to be mine. Rihanna’s got her own. Beyoncé’s got her own, and I’ve got my own. I’m good the way I am.” □





*“I will shut down  
a club. I’ll body-  
roll and twerk, all  
in good fun.”*

**Hair**, Neeko/Tracey  
Mattingly. **Makeup**, Billy  
B/Bridge Artists.  
**Manicure**, Shirlee Ann/  
Enamel Diction.

# RELEASE THE POUNDS BLOCKING YOUR PURPOSE



LIFE COACH AND BEST-SELLING AUTHOR **LISA NICHOLS** WAS WRITING HER UPCOMING BOOK, *ABUNDANCE NOW*, WHEN SHE REALIZED HER WEIGHT WAS KEEPING HER FROM HER BEST LIFE. SHE REVEALS THE EMOTIONAL HEALING SHE NEEDED TO DO BEFORE DROPPING MORE THAN 50 POUNDS **AS TOLD TO CHARREAH K. JACKSON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ZYAIR PORTER**



**I, LISA NICHOLS, HAVE A CLAVICLE, THAT BONE UP BY THE NECK WE SOMETIMES CALL THE COLLAR-BONE. AND FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS, I DID NOT EVEN KNOW A CLAVICLE EXISTED.**

I've shared freely my journey of wrapping my son in a towel when I couldn't afford diapers. I've told my story of coming out of an abusive relationship, becoming a contributor to *The Secret* and earning my first million dollars. I've confessed to failing English class before becoming a best-selling author. But my weight, something you could easily see, wasn't something I ever talked about—even as God whispered to me, I would help Black women lose weight despite not yet letting go of my own.

Last December I sat on the stage of *The Steve Harvey Show* helping others prepare for their New Year's resolutions. One woman stood up and talked about her battle with her weight. I felt like I would be a fraud if I didn't meet her where she was. I was not ready to share my scale numbers and just said, "I'm committed to losing 45 pounds by my next birthday in May." I had declared to the world something I wrestled with in private.

### ■ PINPOINTING THE POUNDS

I've been over 210 pounds much of my adult life. And when you carry weight "well," you can fool yourself into believing you don't mind carrying it. I realized last year that I didn't want to carry it anymore.

I wasn't always a big girl. In school, I ran track and was a state champion hurdler. Until my early twenties, I had a body like Serena Williams's. I was booty, a small waist and C cups. Two things

occurred with that body. First I had a lot of sex looking for a little love. I thought that sex led to love and marriage. After a few times of love not showing up following sex, I put on a jacket to protect myself, which was one layer of weight. I wasn't emotionally mature enough to set a healthy boundary with sex, and it was so painful to feel used. With my thicker body, my booty wasn't stopping traffic. Guys began to tell me, "You have a pretty smile." It's because my ass was spread from east to west. They had just my smile to look at, but it felt like it worked—they could finally see my personality.

The second thing that came with that body was awkward relationships with some women. With my body and charisma, I was sometimes viewed as a threat. So I put on more weight and a false solution occurred. No one gave me a manual for that body, so I traded it in for a jacket I could manage.

### ■ FACING THE FACTS

With more to love, I achieved great success. But if I was a superwoman, weight was my kryptonite. More than 57 percent of African-American women are obese, yet we don't consider ourselves to be. When I was ready to get in better shape, I went to a holistic doctor and paid \$2,000 for an entire body analysis. She sat me down on Skype and said, "I need you to flip to page ten in this 27-page document." The chart gave a range of numbers for being overweight, obese or morbidly

obese. The range for morbidly obese started at 35. I looked at my number. It was 38. I looked down at my body; I had felt pretty sexy that day. But then the reality of my health slowly hit me and I cried. I was mad at myself for letting this happen.

My weight also was leading to other health issues. I was diagnosed with sleep apnea more than ten years ago. Those who suffer from this condition stop breathing or take shallow breaths while asleep and either wake up completely or go to a lighter level of sleep. They are at risk for heart attack, stroke and high blood pressure. I was 225 pounds during my first test and woke up 62 times in an hour. Every night for ten years, I was in danger of dying, and I never rested. In tears last year I cried out, "God, I just want a full night's sleep." The clunky sleep machine also minimized letting men in my space—another layer of the jacket that was creating barriers for people to get close to me.

I started praying for guidance. I said, "God, how can I be more responsible and lead in a better way?" I felt the spirit whisper to me, "Design your body so it lives out your life's purpose." It was clear I had to drop the pounds so my body could be the tool to live out my purpose. I had never connected them that closely.

The second question I asked was, "God, what would prevent me?" I'm hardheaded, so I need to know how I might get in my own way. The response I heard was, "Your life won't be long enough because you didn't take care of your health." I was riveted.

Once you have an awakening, you can't un-know what is revealed. I realized I was in a position to lead others but had been silently condoning a dangerous idea of "carrying your weight well." In December I knew it was time for a change. I didn't want to disappoint God.

## JUMP-START YOUR WEIGHT RELEASE

AFTER HEALING YOUR EMOTIONAL PAIN, GO DIGITAL FOR LASTING WEIGHT LOSS. CHECK OUT THESE FREE AND EFFECTIVE RESOURCES BY CHRISTEN A. JOHNSON

### 1. KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Body Mass Index (BMI) mobile calculator apps, like BMI Calculator, help you see the benchmark, understand your current weight and set realistic targets.

### 2. LOG YOUR MEALS

A food diary can double your weight loss. The MyFitnessPal app makes that easy, with nutrition information for most foods. The service keeps a total of calorie intake and exercise.

### 3. RECRUIT CHEERLEADERS

Whether you join Weight Watchers, search Black Women Losing Weight on Pinterest or log on to blackweightlosssuccess.com, finding a community will assist on the tough days.

### 4. GET MOVING

If the gym or ClassPass isn't your style, work out wherever with videos on Hot5 or Nike+ Training Club phone apps.

### 5. TRACK PROGRESS

Buy a Fitbit, Nike+ Fuelband or Jawbone wristband to monitor movement. Get in shape with friends through its fitness challenges.

## ■ THE INNER WORKOUT

We all know the prescription for weight loss: Eat better and sweat. What we are unconsciously looking for is the healing we have to do that will inspire lasting change.

When I began to consider losing weight as an emotional journey, I had to go to the core of what my weight protected me from. It's not all agony. The weight gave me something! I could show up in a room and I knew I was going to be liked by the women because I represented Mother Earth. I had personality, and they knew their men didn't want me. If a guy chose me, he chose me beyond my body.

I had on a 50-pound emotional jacket that I thought made it easy for others to accept me. The cost of that jacket was my

As I began to move my body, my emotions moved as well. Digging deeper into other causes of my weight gain and why I had kept on the pounds, I finally faced my biggest fear: abandonment. About ten years ago, a friend of a friend offered to give me a body reading, which assessed my life thus far by studying my features. She asked, "What happened at 28?" I was shocked. She added, "Your body is healthy. Your weight is all emotional. Something happened at 28 and you shut down." I said, "I don't know. I'll think about it." I knew the whole time what happened.

I was 28 when my son's father went to prison. That was the biggest form of abandonment to me. My son is 20. I've said a thousand times, "I'm over it." Every time I said it, I was hoping to will

I'm going to get up. The pain has been sitting with me for 20 years." He said, "Trust yourself." I did. I lay down with it and cried it out, and on January 12 of this year I got on the phone with my son's father and finally shared my feelings. We cried, and it was the most healing and beautiful thing. I shocked him and freed me!

I never took time to address my pains. I wrote the book *No Matter What* and never stopped. What I realized was that inside of a "no matter what," there's permission not to heal. You don't get extra credit for bouncing back with an internal shatter no one can see. Because you manage to cover up or produce masterfully with pain in your space doesn't mean it doesn't deserve to be healed. My sister, don't be afraid to seek healing. Heal the emotions and take the power from your stories. You will be stronger.

WE ALL KNOW THE PRESCRIPTION FOR WEIGHT LOSS. WHAT WE ARE UNCONSCIOUSLY LOOKING FOR IS THE HEALING THAT WILL INSPIRE LASTING CHANGE.

## ■ A NEW DAY

I didn't "lose weight" because I don't plan to find it. Releasing the weight was internal and external. I worked out every day for at least 15 minutes, often right in my bedroom. By February I had lost my first 30 pounds. I woke up one morning and felt different. I said, "I think I slept last night." I felt as if I had landed back on earth. That month something else also happened—my clavicle emerged. My neck had a necklace of its own. It's my favorite new jewelry.

I was sure there was the woman I know myself to be inside of the woman I had become. My ancestors didn't go through what they did for me to live in protection. I'm supposed to play as big as I can. It wasn't until I admitted what the weight

gave me that I could let it go.

No woman wants to get to the end of her days, sitting in her rocking chair and saying, "I didn't give it my all." I didn't want to die having something left in me because I didn't confront my pain. You're not afraid of dying if you live right. I released the weight so I could live out my assignment.

It took courage to say to my hurts, *I've addressed you and set you free*. My healing today looks like 53 pounds gone, a gorgeous clavicle and a good night's sleep. □



(Above) Nichols knew she had to make a change. (Right) She loves her lighter frame.



personal joy and a good night's sleep. I decided to begin shedding the jacket and take back all my power.

In December I started working out daily and in January I helped launch Non-Negotiable 90 (nn90.net), my commitment to fitness, with my coach, Anthony Elfonzia. I scaled back on indulgent foods like bread and ate significantly smaller meals. I would take a meal I used to eat and cut it into three servings and eat six times a day. My stomach started to shrink.

myself to that. I never let myself feel abandoned. I never said, "I'm afraid of our son being a Black boy in South Central without you." I never said, "I saw a future for us and I'm angry you tried to get around the system." I never said, "I loved you." Never.

It was time to deal with abandonment and other issues that kept my weight on.

When a dear friend asked me, "Why don't you want to address this pain?" I said, "If I lie down and cry, I don't know if



# SISTER SOLDIERS

**DONNA M. OWENS** TAKES A LOOK AT THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN AMERICA AND CONSIDERS THE ROLE BLACK SORORITIES PLAY IN TODAY'S MOVEMENT

ILLUSTRATION BY KETURAH ARIEL

**D**anielle Green was at work in Washington, D.C., when Baltimore erupted in protests and riots on April 27 just hours after the funeral of Freddie Gray. The 25-year-old Black man had died on April 19, one week after being arrested by Baltimore police and sustaining fatal spinal cord injuries. "I was getting calls and texts from family and friends about the rioting," recalls Green, 41, a public school administrator who lives in Baltimore. "Once I heard what was happening, my mind immediately went to support efforts."

As Maryland state director of Zeta Phi Beta, Green galvanized

fellow sorority sisters to assist the local community. "We attended a town hall meeting; took part in a peace rally led by religious leaders; and donated toiletries to the Gilmore Homes housing project, where Freddie Gray lived," says Green. "It felt like we were doing service in line with the founding ideals and principles of our organization."

Indeed African-American sororities have a storied history of activism in America. In the early 1900's, amid an endemic culture of racism and segregation, Black women first formed Alpha Kappa Alpha and then Delta Sigma Theta on the campus of Howard



**I JOINED DELTA  
BECAUSE OF OUR  
HISTORY OF SOCIAL  
AND POLITICAL  
ACTION. THOSE ISSUES  
REMAIN EXTREMELY  
IMPORTANT TO ME.”**

—CHARLENE CARRUTHERS

University to promote education, uplift communities and engage in philanthropy. These sororities—along with Zeta Phi Beta and Sigma Gamma Rho, which were established later—have used service as a means to mold America’s social and civil rights landscape. “Black sororities have been involved in the push for women’s suffrage, and they’ve launched rural schools and health initiatives for the poor,” says Clara Small, a professor emeritus of history at Salisbury University in Maryland. “They also registered voters, marched and went to jail while fighting for freedom in the Civil Rights Movement.”

Today, as the Black Lives Matter movement spreads across the U.S., members of the nation’s nine historically Black Greek-letter organizations (four sororities and five fraternities) are among those participating in marches, rallies, occupations, die-ins and demonstrations. Yet there has been dissension within some of these groups about how best to respond to the modern-day civil rights crisis that’s unfolding.

Controversy sprang up last December at the height of the protests against police brutality when several of the sororities—AKA, DST and SGRho—issued directives that forbade members from wearing official paraphernalia while engaging in civil disobedience. This perceived distancing from the major social justice issue of our time didn’t go over well with some members, particularly millennials, who hotly debated the matter on social media.

“I wanted my organization to take a clear-cut stance on police brutality and was disappointed when that didn’t happen,” says Charlene Carruthers, 29, a Delta in Chicago who heads Black Youth Project 100, a group of people from across the nation who banded together after Trayvon Martin was gunned down in 2012. Its activism continued in earnest following the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the subsequent deaths of Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Akai Gurley and others. “I joined Delta because of our history of social and political action. Those issues remain extremely important to me,” she says.

Since getting pushback, SGRho has revised its position. “Many of our members challenged us, and we heard them loud and clear,” said Bonita M. Herring, international president of Sigma Gamma Rho. Herring explained the initial ban as “a liability issue,” adding that “if someone is wearing their colors, it looks as if they are speaking for the entire sorority. We are a sisterhood, but the reality is, there is also a business to protect.” Alpha Kappa Alpha similarly changed course. According to a statement later released by the organization, members may wear paraphernalia during peaceful protests. Asked to explain its initial paraphernalia ban, Paulette C. Walker, the national president of Delta Sigma Theta, provided ESSENCE with a written statement that read in part, “We have always [supported] and still continue to support every member’s interest and right to participate in organized nonviolent activities and marches that denounce social injustices in our communities.”

Rasheed Ali Cromwell, a Washington, D.C.-based attorney and a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, believes the current movement requires a concerted and aggressive response. “I’d like to see our organizations collectively develop a national social justice committee that includes an emergency response team,” says Cromwell, who conceived an educational series of workshops and college curricula called The Miseducation of the Black Greek Xperience! Undergraduate chapters should be utilized more, he adds, because “they can quickly mobilize and engage at the grassroots level.

Training should be intergenerational, with grad chapters teaching social justice leadership development to younger members and undergrads providing the elders with tips on utilizing social media. We all have to work together. This is what our founders envisioned. This is who we are.”

After Gray’s death, members of the four sororities got to work in Baltimore. For instance, Sigma Gamma Rho members helped with cleanup at Mondawmin Mall, where the youth uprising began. Delta’s local alumnae chapter collected food and toiletries for seniors in the Penn North neighborhood who were affected by the looting of their local CVS Pharmacy. Area AKA members passed out snacks and beverages to kids during the school closings. And Zeta Phi Beta undergrads from Morgan State University helped clear debris on the streets after the unrest.

“Having organized and participated in solidarity marches, I have seen women in sororities take action,” says Janaye Ingram, 36, an AKA who serves as national executive director of the National Action Network, founded by Rev. Al Sharpton. Knyra Ratcliff, 21, a Troy, Alabama, college student who holds a leadership position with SGRho, has taken part in sorority forums designed to engage law enforcement. “We’re trying to channel the anger into a proactive approach and positive dialogue with police,” she says.

Furthermore, Zeta Phi Beta has developed an initiative called Get Engaged. “We have grave concern for the senseless killing of Black men, women and children, and other injustices that plague our community,” says Mary Breaux Wright, the sorority’s international president. Get Engaged, which is being implemented in collaboration with the NAACP, provides Zeta chapters with a framework to foster citizen engagement and strengthen relationships among the community, elected officials, law enforcement and educators.

Community collaboration is key to effective change, says Delilah Berkley, 24, a Delta who lives in Atlanta. “I’ve been participating in peaceful protests, rallies, die-ins and town halls to speak up for what is right,” she says. “I am extremely passionate about getting my peers involved in stepping up to the plate just as Dr. King did when he was younger. We have to be leaders.” □

**Donna M. Owens** is a Baltimore journalist specializing in politics and health. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha.



The inimitable  
Josephine Baker  
performing in  
Monte Carlo in 1974

## MY BOOTY RECALL

As we continue our #BringTheLove campaign, this month Relationships Editor **Charreah K. Jackson** explores burlesque dancing to help embrace her body—and how all women can do the same

**B**reathe into your p\*ssy,” says Chicava HoneyChild, producer and proprietor of Brown Girls Burlesque. Ten Black women of varying shades and shapes sit in butterfly position inside a New York City dance studio wondering what we got ourselves into. We are the newest recruits of the Broad Squad Institute, a six-week intro course to burlesque, the legendary dance form that mixes storytelling and striptease. The physical stretching has nothing on the class’s psychological push to unleash our sensual selves. “Decide what part of your body or life you want to reclaim with burlesque,” Chicava encourages. “Explore your

# SEX & LOVE

## SEX & LOVE : BURLESQUE

fantasies, desires and the things that bother you.” In these days of butt shots, slut walks and backside selfies, Black women need the space to define and celebrate our bodies and sexuality more than ever.

I get that opportunity as each of us in the class pops out a nipple and tries on pasties of different sizes to cover our areolae. I choose purple pasties and champagne tassels as my first burlesque accessory: I am officially a dancer. Next the bras come off—we tape our pasties on, and the fun begins as we try to get the tassels to twirl. I soon discover I have a breast twin. With clothes on, we could be cousins. But with bras off, we could be sisters. I laugh and bounce. The free-flowing feminine energy is exhilarating, and the experience is one of the most intimate of my life. Next we put the tassels on our pants or undies and try to twirl the tassels with our butts. This isn’t about turning someone else on but about reveling in our beauty and our bodies.

Every burlesque dancer needs a moniker. For our second class, a few graduates of the institute come and share the backstory of their burlesque names, including sassaBrass: The Poom Poom Priestess. “I’m a pleasure-filled healer who uses performance to deliver the gospel of the p\*ssy,” she shares on her Web site. “Welcome to a church where we p\*ssy-pop for praise, twerk for testimony and worship in service of our liberation.” I’m in love with her fusion of spirituality and sex, something I’ve been fighting to unite as a sexual being and granddaughter of a southern minister. My grandmother avoided saying the word sex, and my mother, like her mother, skipped the sex talk with her daughter. I’m determined to end the silence on sexuality that plagued my family and many others. The next morning in the shower, words that feel southern and feminine sashay around in my mind. *Peaches. Molasses. Sweet potato.* Finally my burlesque name comes to me: Soufflé. The dish that makes everyday sweet potatoes sound chic fits like a nipple tassel.

Chicava started burlesque in 2006 and revisited history for her name. The



(From left) Jackson in her Sunday best for her first burlesque recital; the dancers of Brown Girls Burlesque strike a pose in New York City.

Hampton University and Goddard College graduate remembered the story of Sor Teresa Chicaba, a West African nun. She was sold into slavery in the 1600’s, and after her owner died she joined a convent and later became a celebrated healer. Chicava was inspired for her stage name. “We honor women before us by being empowered,” she says. On [igavemybody.tumblr.com](http://igavemybody.tumblr.com), Chicava pays tribute to Black trailblazers of burlesque from Josephine Baker to Chinkie Grimes, who was a maid for Orson Welles before becoming a performer in the 1940’s. The renaissance of Black performers—including Jeez Loueez in Chicago, Alotta Boutté in San Francisco and Vagina Jenkins in Oakland—is growing.

Yet freeing your sexual self doesn’t come without backlash. In the music video for her song “Yoga,” Janelle Monáe trades her tuxedo for jeans and a crop top and gyrates in front of the mirror. Like me, many loved her freer persona, but it made others uncomfortable to see the singer embrace her booty. To some, she hadn’t gone far enough. One guy tweeted Monáe, saying, “Girl, stop being so soulful. Be sexy. Tired of those dumbass suits.”

Monáe’s response was poignant: “Sit down. I’m not for male consumption.” Her tweet highlighted the reality that too much of our bodies’ moving and being sexual is for men. Of course,

it’s not just the fellas or society who is policing our sexuality. Sometimes it’s us. As I work on my routine for Soufflé, I get a pitch for a story titled “Guiding THOTS to freedom.” It’s from a young Black woman describing herself as a modern Harriet Tubman. Living in the shadows of Black women characterized as Jezebel and Sapphire has led many of us to fight the stereotype by being “good girls.” Too many Black bodies are used as a commodity, but it doesn’t ever justify calling another woman That Ho Over There.

In the week we learn how to seductively take off stockings and gloves, a friend excitedly shares that she’s getting fat taken out of her stomach and put into her butt. I invite her to check out the class. My butt doesn’t get bigger from going, but I do fall deeper in love with the body I’m blessed with. “Plastic surgery won’t cure self-esteem issues,” Chicava says. “We all have things we want to change. The first step is to accept yourself. Then to celebrate that you are a complete, unique phenomenon.”

I remember her words during my first burlesque performance to a mash-up of Ray Charles’s “Georgia on My Mind” and Beyoncé and Nicki Minaj’s “Feeling Myself.” I take back my brown body, one shake at a time.



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# HIP-HOP HAS A HEART

He has a top-selling album and two Grammys. Now Houston-born rapper **Lecrae** dishes on his faith, music and marriage

BY CHRISTEN A. JOHNSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NINO MUÑOZ

**Q** Your music mixes God and a good time. Is it difficult merging worlds?

**A** Like Al Green, Aretha Franklin and others, I come from the church. Jesus changed my life and I need Him every day. That's part of me, like being from the South. Every day is not about the club, so you need somebody addressing pain as well as love. My music is soul therapy.

**Q** When did you fall in love with hip-hop?

**A** Growing up my cousins were hip-hop heads. They had me on The 2 Live Crew way before I knew what they were talking about. I saw myself in Tupac. He was honest, transparent and artistic.

**Q** How do you keep your marriage strong in the music industry?

**A** I make sacrifices so my wife knows she's first. On tour off days, I fly to Atlanta to spend time with her and our three kids. You don't stop dating after "I do." Nine years later, I still ask her on dates like I did in college. We like laughing and look at Instagram videos in bed.

**Q** What attracts you most to your wife?

**A** When she trusts me even if she doesn't agree with my decision. Physically, I appreciate that she keeps her hair and nails done. She does not wear a lot of makeup and I love her natural beauty.

**Q** You're performing at Essence Fest this month! Are you ready?

**A** This is huge for my life and career. My mother goes every year. I'm excited to contribute to Black music in this massive way—and to eat beignets.

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# WOMAN, INTERRUPTED

She came onto the Hollywood scene and stole our hearts in the 1990's—and then she was gone. What happened to **Lisa Nicole Carson**? In an exclusive, the actress reveals her fight to find her happy place

AS TOLD TO YOLANDA SANGWENI  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIK UMPHREY

I was the belle of the ball in the late nineties, with roles on *Ally McBeal* and *ER* and in *Love Jones*. I've always been full of energy and would often be twirling around on sets. But my high-spirited moments looked like something else to one of the producers on *ER*. He had a family history of bipolar disorder and thought I might be exhibiting some of the symptoms. I didn't know what he was talking about or how it could apply to me, so I just continued with my life. A year later I was in New York City catching up with loved ones when I unexpectedly had a fit in my hotel—yelling, throwing things, crying and raising enough hell that the staff called an ambulance. I ended up being hospitalized for a few weeks, and a psychiatrist gave a diagnosis: bipolar disorder. I was stunned and clueless, and so was my family. I didn't want to believe I had any mental health issues and went into denial. I was supposed to take medicine, and I didn't. I'm animated and exuberant, and this made it difficult to determine what was my normal and what was actually odd behavior.

Carson in  
Los Angeles  
in May 2015

# HEALTHY & HAPPY



"I feel confident, and proud I've been able to come back."



Working the red carpet in the 1990's



Carson with the cast of *Ally McBeal*

with various treatments including mood stabilizers and antipsychotic medications. I've learned to look for the symptoms in myself: getting too euphoric or overstimulated. My bipolar disorder is usually exhibited on the high-energy and manic end. Some people who have the illness are more on the depressive side.

## Body Beautiful

Before my mind and moods came under scrutiny, my body and I had already gone through a journey. I was a tomboy growing up. Then puberty hit, and seemingly overnight I had a 38DD bra size. I constantly wore sweatshirts and was mad at my body. Then I fell in love as I neared my twenties. When I realized my body could turn a man to mush, it became empowering. I was often the curvy one on set, and I felt beautiful no matter my size. I still enjoy the company of men, although dating has been interesting with my mental health condition.

When I was hospitalized, I was in a relationship, and he was terrific about it. We stayed together for a while afterward. I'm not dating anyone seriously now and don't feel pressured to do so, but I hope The One comes along.

## Finding My Peace

The best thing about taking a step back was spending time with my mother. She passed in 2011. What brought me through has been medicine, prayer, music and my dog, Josephine. I see a psychiatrist and a psychologist regularly and now just take antianxiety medication. I've returned to L.A. to give my career another try. I'm going on auditions and handling rejection better than I did in the past. We recently had an *Ally McBeal* reunion for the TV Land Awards. It was wonderful getting dressed up and seeing everyone.

I'm tackling the myth that African-American women have to be pillars of strength. We have the right to fall. We have the right not to always have our sh-- together. We just have to take our mental health as seriously as we do the physical. Do not be afraid to go to a therapist or a doctor to make sure everything is fine. I am excited for my new chapter. I now am stronger and ready for what's next, while taking care of my emotional health.

## Reality Checkout

After the incident at the hotel, I was in utter shock. I had thought I had it all together since people typically came to me for advice. But there I was. Professionally, I was on top of the world, and then I had the rug ripped out from under me. If I had been seeing a psychiatrist or a therapist before the breakdown, maybe somebody would have been able to detect that I was off balance. Nobody close to me had a clue, and neither did I. During my stay in the hospital, I was given medicine to stabilize my moods, and I spoke with a therapist. Upon being discharged, I returned to Los Angeles and went back to work on *Ally McBeal* feeling more in control. Everybody on the show was wonderful to me, but my contract wasn't renewed for the final season. Nobody gave me an explanation, but I assumed it had to do with what had happened. I was devastated.

## Memoirs of Hollywood

Once my episode became public, I was torn apart in the press, which really hurt. Up to that point, I'd led a charmed life in show business. My mother recognized my talent early, and I did my first play, *Fiddler on the Roof*, in the second grade. I continued doing theater and taught myself how to act by watching movies and other productions. At 23 I did a play in New York and was asked to try out for *Divas*, a TV movie originally produced by Quincy Jones. I auditioned for him in L.A. He said, "This girl has it." I could have fainted, and I have always cherished that memory. I got the part, booked *Jason's Lyric* soon after and the roles kept coming.

But even if you have "it," you can falter. *Ally McBeal* was my last Hollywood gig. After that I moved back to my hometown of New York City and stayed there for more than a decade. During that time I worked with many doctors to get as much control of my life as I could and experimented

### BIPOLAR BRIEF

Thanks to popular fictional characters like Crazy Eyes in *Orange Is the New Black* and Andre in *Empire*, the dialogue about mental illness has been growing in our community. Bipolar disorder, formerly manic-depressive disorder, is a brain condition that causes extreme shifts in mood and energy levels. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, for people with the illness, an overly joyful or excited state is a manic episode, and an exceedingly sad or hopeless state is a depressive one. For more info, contact the National Alliance on Mental Illness ([nami.org](http://nami.org)). It also offers free support programs. —Christen A. Johnson

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# GEORGIA ON OUR MINDS

ALLOW US TO REINTRODUCE YOU TO THE CAPITAL OF THE SOUTH: ATLANTA, WITH ITS SURROUNDING CITIES, HAS TRANSFORMED INTO A CULTURAL EPICENTER

BY CHARREAH K. JACKSON



# ATLWOOD

**B**een to Georgia lately? If not, you missed your chance to snap a selfie with Anthony Mackie, who was filming Marvel's new *Captain America* movie in Atlanta this past spring, or watch *Magic Mike XXL* star Channing Tatum undress in the flesh in nearby Tybee Island, where 300 lucky local ladies saw the cast perform last fall. With a boom in entertainment and business development, as well as experiences commemorating the city's history, Atlanta and its surrounding areas are enjoying a cultural renaissance. "We have the most construction happening in Atlanta since the Olympics [in 1996]," says LaRonda Sutton, director of the Mayor's Office of Entertainment. Sutton was selected by Mayor Kasim Reed, who served as an entertainment lawyer before his election. She says the administration's mission is to expand the city as an entertainment hub: "We're trying for world domination." In 2016, Tyler Perry Studios—whose shows on OWN, the Oprah Winfrey Network, bring in strong ratings—will celebrate ten years based in Atlanta.

# LIFE

## LIFE : ATLANTA ATTRACTIONS

### CENTENNIAL PARK



Perry was one of the first to make movies in the southern capital. Now other producers have followed in his footsteps—at least 30 major projects are in the works. The Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act, passed in 2008, provides a huge tax incentive. Television favorites like *Being Mary Jane*, *Single Ladies*, *The Walking Dead* and *Vampire Diaries* have all filmed around the city and neighboring towns, along with big-screen productions such as *The Hunger Games* sequels and *Selma*. But you don't have to work in the industry to enjoy the scene: Companies like Atlanta Movie Tours allow folks to revisit their favorite movies.

After leaving the fantasy world, you can transport to the realities of the past at The National Center for Civil and Human Rights, which opened downtown last year. “Only 25 percent of people today remember the March on Washington,” notes Judith Service Montier, vice-president of marketing at the center. “If we don't know our history, we are destined to repeat it. We can use history to help us handle what's happening today and build for the future.”

In the center's *Rolls Down Like Water: The American Civil Rights Movement* gallery, director George C. Wolfe has created an interactive exhibit. It opens with images of the everyday for White and Black Americans in the 1950's and 1960's mounted on adjacent walls. At first the lives appear to be similar, with scenes from pageants and church and of good times. But when you look up, pictures of the KKK and other dangers to Blacks light up the ceiling, underscoring the stark difference between the races.

The museum's most talked-about exhibit is a sit-in lunch counter simulation that brings the plight of protestors to life. Guests sit at the counter, put on headphones, place their hands on the table and go back in time as they listen to angry patrons yell insults and threats while the counter moves. A clock tells you how long you lasted through the assault. During our tour, about 20 Freedom Riders, including activist Hank Thomas, were there taking photos beside their mug shots plastered on the wall.

A few miles away from the museum sit the childhood home, church, grave site and historical center of civil rights icon and Nobel Peace Prize recipient the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In many of our communities, streets named for King and other leaders are dilapidated, as Erykah Badu croons in “A.D. 2000,” but Atlanta is working to reverse the trend. “Our Martin Luther King Boulevard is going to be the best in the world,” says Sutton. “It's the legacy of the mayor and city to make sure of that. This is where he's from.” After hitting the King Center and historic places near Auburn Avenue, visitors can now hop on the Atlanta Streetcar, a \$70 million project, to explore other parts of the city.

Just off Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard, in Atlanta's West End and Atlanta University Center area, is the studio for *Being*



Visitors relive a sit-in at The National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

“We have the most construction happening in Atlanta since the Olympics.” —LARONDA SUTTON

**Buckhead Atlanta offers luxury shopping options. (Below) Tourists can take the city's new streetcar to visit historic sites.**



*Mary Jane*. In a city already heralded for its luxury offerings, the presence of stars like

Gabrielle Union has likely helped in the expansion of high-end retail. Buckhead Atlanta opened last fall with new locations for Hermès, Christian Louboutin and Jimmy Choo. Whether shopping or star watching, folks can waltz on granite. On the music front, the Centennial Olympic Park offers the Wednesday Wind-Down outdoor concert series, and the trendsetting Brooklyn festival Afropunk is slated to add an Atlanta date this year.

The influx of culture and celebrity has boosted the state's bottom line. “There were 150 productions filmed in 2014—the economic impact for the state was \$5.1 billion,” Sutton shares. The city is already looking ahead, as 2016 is the year of music for Georgia. We see why the Peach State is singing.

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# Step Up Your Child's STEM Skills

USE TIME AWAY FROM SCHOOL TO GET YOUR KIDS INTO GEAR FOR THE GROWING TECH INDUSTRY

BY YLONDA GAULT CAVINESS

With a few quick taps of a finger, your 8-year-old can probably post a selfie on Instagram or upload a video on YouTube. Your toddler can grab your phone and play pick-up sticks before you even know it's missing from your purse. While it may seem that this gadget-savvy generation is well prepared for the tech-heavy jobs of tomorrow, the new market will demand kids not only know how to *use* computers but also *think* like them.

Summer downtime is the perfect opportunity to jump-start your child's future and blend tech fun with solid skills. "The interest is there but we lack the depth of technical understanding that you see in other communities," says Kimberly Bryant, founder of Black Girls Code.

STEM education, or training in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, is designed to help young minds analyze data, see patterns and create computer-based solutions. From gaming to software design, low-cost camps and year-round programs have begun cropping up all over to prepare the next generation of tech workers. In 2009 the Obama administration's Educate to Innovate made STEM learning

a high priority—particularly for underrepresented populations. According to the Department of Commerce, STEM jobs are projected to grow by almost double that of other careers by 2018. And STEM workers command salaries 26 percent higher than those in non-STEM fields.

"Teachers, bankers—we get those careers. But a food science engineer or an animator? The challenge in the Black community is we often have a narrow base of career knowledge," says Damon A. Williams, Ph.D., Boys & Girls Clubs of America's senior vice-president of program, training & youth development. "That has to change if our kids are going to be a part of the new economy."

While some summer learning opportunities fill up early, there may be openings for this season if you act quickly. If not, you can always book your child for after-school sessions or get a jump on next summer. Check out these programs:

## Junior FIRST LEGO League

Beginning with children as young as 6, the nationwide program uses kids' natural love of LEGO bricks as the foundation for engineering-based

learning. As they advance in age and ability, LEGO League participants learn to develop and build robotic structures and compete for more than \$20 million in scholarship opportunities.

**Web site:** [usfirst.org/roboticsprograms](http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms)

## Boys & Girls Clubs of America

In a partnership with Google and the Corporation for National and Community Service, the nonprofit aims to inspire and educate the next generation of computer scientists through the Code Corps program.

**Web site:** [bgca.org](http://bgca.org)

## National Society of Black Engineers

The organization offers 300 kids in grades 3 through 8 exposure to STEM projects with its free Summer Engineering Experience for Kids (SEEK) camps. Mentors help students develop problem-solving skills with fun exercises and design competitions.

**Web site:** [nsbe.org/Seek](http://nsbe.org/Seek)

## Level Playing Field Institute

Centered in California, this nonprofit provides no-cost summer and year-round academic support programs targeted toward Black, Latino and Native-American kids—from fifth grade through high school—offering immersion in STEM subjects.

**Web site:** [lpfi.org](http://lpfi.org)

## Hidden Genius Project

Developed specifically for Black boys, the program is dedicated to mentoring high schoolers for careers in fields such as software engineering, user-experience design and tech entrepreneurship. Its sessions run both during the summer and the academic school year.

**Web site:** [hiddengeniusproject.org](http://hiddengeniusproject.org)

## Black Girls Code

With camps and events in Oakland, New York City, Memphis and Dallas, the four-year-old organization offers training in game design, HTML, app design and more. Girls ages 7 to 17 are the focus. Next year, its programs will include boys.

**Web site:** [blackgirlscode.com/programmevents.html](http://blackgirlscode.com/programmevents.html)

**Ylonda Gault Caviness** is author of *Child, Please: How Mama's Old-School Lessons Helped Me Check Myself Before I Wrecked Myself* (Tarcher).

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## WHERE TO BUY

### COVER

See "Orange Like Us."

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**Page 5:** Ronny Kobo dress, \$288, shopbop.com. **Melinda Maria** cuff, \$148, and bangle, \$68, melindamaria.com. **EF Collection** bangle, \$1,050, efcollection.com. **Elizabeth and James** bangle, \$125, revolveclothing.com. **Jimmy Choo** sandals, \$795, jimmychoo.com. Nose ring, subject's own.

**Page 6:** See "Orange Like Us."

### THE VOICE

**Page 45:** Tadashi Shoji dress, \$428, similar styles at tadashishoji.com. Ring, subject's own.

### ORANGE LIKE US

**Pages 82-83:** (From left) On Samira Wiley: **La Petite Robe di Chiara Boni** dress, \$960, Neiman Marcus, White Plains, NY, 877-634-6269. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings, \$525, 888-255-0640. **Schutz** sandals, \$180, shop.schutz-shoes.com.

On Adrienne C. Moore: **Qristyl Frazier Designs** dress, \$240, qristylfrazierdesigns.com. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings\* and bracelet, \$1,475, NYC, 888-255-0640.

On Laverne Cox: **Walter Mendez** dress\*, made to order only, waltercollection.com for more info. **Alexis Bittar** ring, \$275, alexisbittar.com. Earrings, stylist's own.

On Danielle Brooks: **Céline** dress, \$1,150, Neiman Marcus, White Plains, NY, 877-634-6269. **Jennifer Fisher** rings, \$110-\$165, 888-255-0640. **Alexis Bittar** ring, \$275, alexisbittar.com. **Christian Louboutin** sandals, \$2,495, christianlouboutin.com.

On Uzo Aduba: **Walter Mendez** dress\*, made to order only, waltercollection.com for more info. **Robert Lee Morris** bracelet, \$275, robertleemorris.com. **Jennifer Fisher** bracelets, \$265-\$420, and ring, \$280, 888-255-0640.

On Vicky Jeudy: **La Petite Robe di Chiara Boni** dress, \$650, Neiman Marcus, Short Hills, NJ, 877-777-5321. **Alexis Bittar** necklace, \$450, alexisbittar.com. **Robert Lee Morris** bracelet, \$650, robertleemorris.com. **Jennifer Fisher** ring, \$285, 888-255-0640. **Tom Ford** shoes, \$1,090, 888-866-3673.

**Pages 86-87:** (From left) On Adrienne C. Moore: **La Petite Robe di Chiara Boni** dress, \$995, saksfifthavenue.com. **Alexis Bittar** earrings, \$195, bracelet, \$595, and ring, \$195, alexisbittar.com.

On Danielle Brooks: **La Petite Robe di Chiara Boni** dress, \$695, Neiman Marcus, Short Hills, NJ, 877-777-5321. **Erickson Beamon** earrings, \$24, Henri Bendel, NYC, 212-247-1100.

On Samira Wiley: **Carmen Marc Valvo** dress, \$1,075, Neiman Marcus, Short Hills, NJ, 877-777-5321. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings, \$525, 888-255-0640.

On Laverne Cox: **RVN** dress, \$298, saksfifthavenue.com. **Arme de L'Amour** necklace, \$375, armedelamour.com. Earrings, stylist's own.



On Uzo Aduba: **La Petite Robe di Chiara Boni** dress, \$960, Neiman Marcus, White Plains, NY, 877-634-6269. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings\*, NYC, 888-255-0640.

On Vicky Jeudy: **T by Alexander Wang** dress, \$350, Neiman Marcus, Short Hills, NJ, 877-777-5321. **Pluma** earrings, \$155, forzieri.com.

### SEXY, SPORTY SPARKS

**Page 90:** Moschino Cheap and Chic moto jacket, \$1,395, and dress, \$535, bloomingdales.com. **BaubleBar** ear adornment set, \$36, baublebar.com. **Miu Miu** sneakers, \$1,490, Saks Fifth Avenue. **Elisabeth Weinstock** soccer ball, \$1,450, elisabethweinstock.com.

**Page 91:** Milly coat, \$850, Nordstrom. **Ronny Kobo** top, \$198, shopbop.com.

**Roksanda Ilincic** bikini bottom, \$215, Saks Fifth Avenue. **Graziela Gems** earrings, \$320, grazielagems.com. **Melinda Maria** bangle, \$68, melindamaria.com. **Effy Jewelry** Signature ring\*, effyjewelry.com. **EF Collection** bangle, \$1,050, efcollection.com. **Nicholas Kirkwood** sandals, \$795, Saks Fifth Avenue.

**Gemma** ring, \$198, Intermix. **Elizabeth and James** bangle, \$110, couture.zappos.com, and bangle, \$125, revolveclothing.com. Nose ring (worn throughout), subject's own.

**Page 92:** Cynthia Rowley wet suit, \$250, cynthiarowley.com. Vintage **Guy Okazaki** surfboard.

**Page 93:** ICB dress, \$1,995, ICB, NYC, 212-997-3600. **B.Tempt'd** bra, \$18, btemptd.wacoal-america.com. **Melinda Maria** drop earrings, \$58, and studs, \$128, melindamaria.com.

**Page 94:** Michael Michael Kors top, \$135, Bloomingdale's. **Betsey Johnson** tank, \$46, Nordstrom, NYC, 212-220-2080. **Barbara Bui** trousers, \$1,425, Bloomingdale's.

**Melinda Maria** ring, \$128, melindamaria.com. **Effy Jewelry** ring\*, effyjewelry.com. **Logan Hollowell Jewelry** ring, \$675, logan.hollowell.com. **Elizabeth and James** cuff, \$375, bloomingdales.com. **BaubleBar** ring set, \$42, baublebar.com. **Miu Miu** sneakers, \$1,490, Saks Fifth Avenue.

**Page 95:** T by Alexander Wang top, \$320, shopbop.com. **Elizabeth and James** skirt, \$325, Bergdorf Goodman. **Elizabeth and James** briefs\*, elizabethandjames.us. **Elisabeth Weinstock** boxing gloves, \$1,450, elisabethweinstock.com. **Dior** "SoElectric" sunglasses, \$505, Dior stores. **DKNY** sneakers, \$125, dkny.com.

### HIP-HOP HAS A HEART

**Page 106:** Sand suit, \$1,095, select Saks Fifth Avenue stores. **Rag & Bone** shirt, \$80, Barneys New York. **Kenzo** hat, \$70, barneyswarehouse.com. Ring, stylist's own. Necklace and watch, subject's own. □

\*price upon request



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## HOROSCOPE



### Cancer June 21 to July 22

**OVERVIEW** Home and family nurture your spirit. You have a heart of gold and will give a pal the shirt off your back. Because of your superior people and creative skills, you're drawn to careers in customer service, education, business or counseling. A water sign, you can be easygoing, but like your ruling planet, the moon, you have many faces: from upbeat and vivacious to despondent and listless. You're compatible with Virgo, Pisces, Taurus and Scorpio, and while the sexual tension with Capricorn, your opposite, is a given, so is an eventual breakup. **THE YEAR AHEAD** Romantic, platonic and family relationships leave you overemotional. Your doormat status will only change when you communicate your needs. **THIS MONTH LOVE:** Expect the unexpected, but trust your instincts. **WORK:** Mixing business with pleasure is a recipe for disaster. **MONEY:** Your financial woes have more to do with oversharing than mismanagement. **INSPIRATION:** When it comes to happiness, following your heart doesn't require giving it away.

### Leo

#### ► July 23 to August 22

**LOVE:** Settling could be an option for some, but keeping your self-respect is important too. **WORK:** Owning a business is doable, but not if it means sacrificing your home life. **MONEY:** Let common sense be your guide through any financial process. **INSPIRATION:** You can be the hero of your story even when the dialogue sucks.

### Virgo

#### ► August 23 to September 22

**LOVE:** Plan a Fourth of July getaway with your honey or a family gathering to mend fences. **WORK:** Your control

issues need to be unpacked and reorganized. **MONEY:** When seeking funds or advice, use your analytical skills. **INSPIRATION:** Dwelling on the past makes the present less enjoyable.

### Libra

#### ► September 23 to October 22

**LOVE:** Your need to please must be offset by having your voice heard. **WORK:** Initiating a walking group or book club promotes teamwork. **MONEY:** Check with a pro before taking on big-ticket items like a car or a home renovation. **INSPIRATION:** Your people connection can mend the fabric of your soul and revive your spirit.

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## Scorpio

► **October 23 to November 21**

**LOVE:** Set the right tone before a long-overdue heart-to-heart. **WORK:** Your methodical nature on the job should give way to spontaneity. **MONEY:** Revamp your budget to pay the bills. **INSPIRATION:** Determining your destiny can galvanize your desire to get there.

## Sagittarius

► **November 22 to December 21**

**LOVE:** It's time to assess that relationship. **WORK:** Your gift of gab is in overdrive. When bosses spew it out, soak it up. **MONEY:** Be open to new ideas. **INSPIRATION:** Your understanding heart helps the most insurmountable situations.

## Capricorn

► **December 22 to January 19**

**LOVE:** When it comes to a smokin' hot beau, family doesn't get a vote. Couples, alone time is essential. **WORK:** Changes on the job, business travel or training sessions are in the cards. Embrace it! **MONEY:** A healthy lifestyle needs to be rewarded. **INSPIRATION:** Growth comes with the company you keep and the lessons you learn.

## Aquarius

► **January 20 to February 18**

**LOVE:** When your It status meshes with your confidence, the choice is yours. **WORK:** Avoid volatile issues that can affect your livelihood. **MONEY:** Family finances such as an inheritance, 401(k) or loans must be addressed as a group. **INSPIRATION:** Missed opportunities are never a loss if you have learned from them.

## Pisces

► **February 19 to March 20**

**LOVE:** An old flame or friend can be enjoyed like no time has elapsed. Couples, kids see everything. **WORK:** A temporary position may suit, but long term is a hard nut to crack. **MONEY:** Consider unlikely sources of income or a side gig. **INSPIRATION:** Wiggle room need not be for tight places, but for a meeting of the minds.

## Aries

► **March 21 to April 19**

**LOVE:** Don't burn the candle at both ends, but rather set the mood with one. **WORK:** Your efforts are paying big dividends. **MONEY:** Monitor funds as the excitement of a new look for you or the home looms. **INSPIRATION:** The why of your motivation is as important as the what.

## Taurus

► **April 20 to May 20**

**LOVE:** When you meet an unlikely suitor, go for it. Couples, lose the stubbornness. **WORK:** Training, relocating or continuing education offers new prospects. **MONEY:** Plan carefully and reject impulsive spending. **INSPIRATION:** Don't lose sight of finding your bliss even when roadblocks make it seem impossible.

## Gemini

► **May 21 to June 20**

**LOVE:** Use diplomacy when getting to the heart of the matter. **WORK:** Unexpected deadlines create tension, but your calm effectiveness rocks. **MONEY:** If finances are at the core of your lack of creativity, hire a pro and keep it moving. **INSPIRATION:** Your expansive outlook can only be contained by the limits you set. □



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# WHAT I KNOW NOW

SUPERMODEL TURNED BEAUTY ENTREPRENEUR **IMAN** IMPARTS SOME WISDOM SHE'S PICKED UP OVER THE YEARS AS TOLD TO VANESSA K. DE LUCA



"Don't ever cheat yourself by accepting something less," says the icon, who celebrates her sixtieth birthday this month.

**I could never have predicted...** That my Iman cosmetics line would be successful from the very beginning when I launched it in 1994. I had been told it takes a long time, anywhere from six months to a year. But it was the right time, the right product, and the stars were aligned.

**The biggest risk I have taken is...** Blindly leaving Africa in 1975 to become a model. I had never even read a fashion magazine. I think about the audacity and courage it took. I felt I had nothing to lose. I banked on myself. The people who are the most successful in life are not stopped by fear. Instead of saying, "What if it doesn't work out?" say, "But what if I succeed?"

**The hardest lesson I've learned is...** To be patient and let things unfold organically. I believe the universe has great plans for us. When you are young, you don't learn that.

**You will never regret...** Knowing your worth. Don't ever cheat yourself by accepting something less. When I started modeling, they tried to pay Black models less than they paid Caucasian models. I turned down those jobs because I knew what I was worth.

**The advice I'm glad I never took is...** Whenever someone told me, "It's not right for you" or "You're not right for it." This happened a lot when I was a model and then when I became an entrepreneur. I don't change the way I think; I change the environment.

**Always make room for...** Change. Embrace it; invite it. Change makes you find your calling, your legacy and God's divine plan for your life. Don't run from it.

**The key to my happiness right now is...** Quiet and solitude. The environment we live in now, the city, the phones, the computers...I think it's important to find time for myself and to remind myself again and again to shut it all off. Mindfulness is the key.

**I hope people will remember me most for...** My service—making women of color look and feel their best and love the skin they are in.

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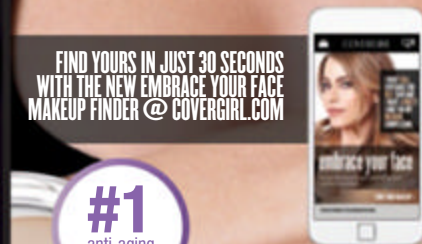
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